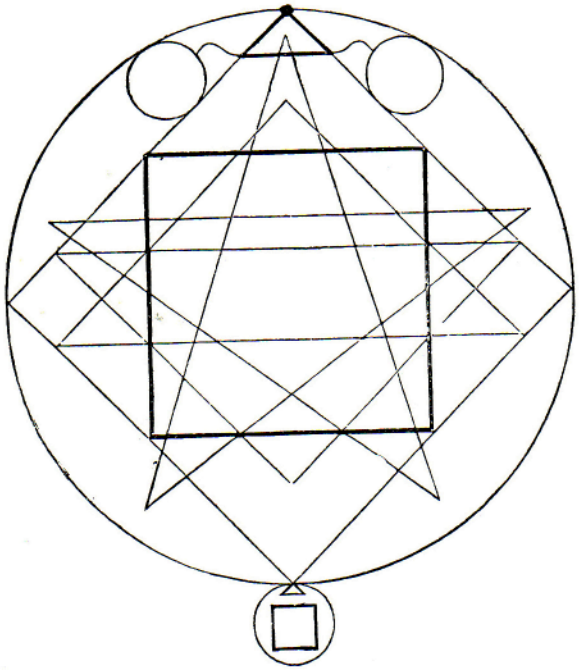
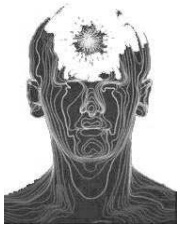
Meditation Triangle Units



Shiva, The Destroyer and the Restorer

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A Study in Psychosynthesis and Meditation



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Foreword

“God-realisation, or *siddhi* means Self-realization in the highest sense of the term. One consciously realises his oneness with the Supreme. As long as the seeker remains in ignorance, he will feel that the Supreme is someone else who has infinite Power, while he, the seeker or devotee, is the feeblest person on earth. But the moment he realises the Supreme, he comes to know that he and the Supreme (God) are absolutely one in both the inner and the outer life. God-realisation means one's identification with one's absolute Highest Self. When one can identify with one's highest Self and remain in that consciousness forever, when one can reveal and manifest it at one's own command, that is God-realisation", that is Self-realization.

Meditation and Mysticism is an individual path into the world of the divine within and beyond rites, rituals and philosophies. It is the inner light and sound provide the spiritual guidance

As it is also a path full of mysteries, it is not understood by everyone and very often it is mistaken to be a path of the Aghories or idles. It is false to consider it as a path of misunderstanding, pretension or spiritual lunacy. It is in fact a path of complete freedom and serenity beyond all social etiquettes, very often confronting people’s attitudes.

Instead of being a path of external ado, it is a silent life-style of its own either leading to self-realization or off-shooting from it.

Like the natural phenomena of the beautiful rainbow created by the light of the Sun and the colours of the nature, mysticism excels with the light of God and the colours of philosophies. Although God or God-realization is somehow hardly comprehensible to intellect, feeling the divinity is always possible with open heart through purity and faith.

Such an inert experience is unfolded and amplified only to those who either have an easy recipiency or who are following the guidance of an adept of the field.

As any other system mysticism allows the followers to have a taste of the divine existence according to their levels of consciousness. In short, it is an open way of spiritual perception which embodies multi-dimensional sadhnas or sidhis as they are

milestones or stations of the way from where edges of the destination are either fathomable or visible as they lie within a reachable distance.

Self-realization is a concept that has become widely popular in the Western and that has great influence from some Eastern religions. For instance, for the Hindu or Bharat religion self-realization refers to a profound spiritual awakening where there is an awakening from an illusory self identify image (*Ego*), to the true, divine, perfect condition that the individual is. The branch of Advaita Vedanta is the one that has especially developed this concept.

"True realisation takes place on knowing and seeing God in His transcendental form. It is a metaphysical experience within the human body. The manifestation of inherent divinity is in reality the revelation of the divine self of man. This is not different from the Supreme Self that permeates even the tiniest particle in the universe. It is accessible to all human beings."

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It is upon this trans-sensuous experience that we become truly religious.

Lord Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita , "Neither by study of the Vedas nor by austere penance, nor by charity, nor even by rituals can I be seen in my transcendental form, Arjuna". In an earlier verse (4.34), Krishna tells Arjuna that this para- vidya or knowledge of the spirit can be imparted by a wise seer and an illumined soul alone. Such a sadguru does not stuff your mind with prolific description of Atman and Parmatman , but one who takes you beyond the different paths of realisation.

The life of every individual is an unstable mixture of pairs of opposites. For most of us, everyday life is replete with trials and tribulations of varying degrees and magnitude. While the thoughtful among men seek to know the meaning and purpose of life, the ignorant ones just grumble and talk of a "cruel" God whenever in distress. Human life has a higher and nobler purpose and the destiny of a human being is to move higher up in the cosmic order to reach perfection and to realise the permanent and Supreme Bliss in the Realm of God. The religious books themselves exhort human beings to know and realise the real aim of their life and not just confine themselves to ritualistic reading and recitation of scriptures.

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From "A Treatise on White Magic" (or, "The Way of the Disciple) , by Alice A. Bailey, pages 632-640 (extracts) , Lucis Press, London 1951 and 1979.

THE NEW AGE GROUPS AND TRAINING

To those of us who are working on the inner side, the workers in the world fall into three groups:

1. Those, few and far between, who are true Aquarians. These work under real difficulties, for their vision is beyond the grasp of the majority, and they meet often lack of understanding, frequent disappointment in their fellow workers, and much loneliness.

2. Those who are straight Pisceans. These work with much greater facility and find a more rapid response from those around them. Their work is more doctrinal, less inclusive and coloured by the spirit of separation. They include the mass of world workers in all the various departments of human thought and welfare.

3. Those Pisceans who are enough developed to respond to the Aquarian message, but who-—as yet-—cannot trust themselves to employ the real Aquarian methods of work and message.

For instance, they have in the political field, a sense of internationalism, but they cannot apply it when it comes to the understanding of others. They think they have a universal consciousness, but when it comes to a test, they discriminate and eliminate. They constitute a much smaller group than the true Pisceans and are doing good work and filling a much needed place. The problem they present however to the Aquarian worker lies in the fact that though they respond to the ideal and regard themselves as of the new age, they are not truly so. They see a bit of the vision and have grasped the theory but cannot express it in action.

Thus we have these three groups doing much needed work and reaching through their united undertakings the mass of people and fulfilling thus their dharma. One group works necessarily under the glamour of public opinion. The intermediate group has a most difficult task to perform, for where there is no clear vision the voice of their chosen environment and the voice of the inner group of world Knowers are often in conflict and they are pulled hither and thither as they respond first to one and then to the other. The group of those who respond more fully to the incoming Aquarian vibration register the voices of the leaders of the other two groups, but the voice of the guiding Masters and the voice of the group of world Masters serve to guide them unerringly forward.

Therefore the immediate goal for all aspiring disciples at this time can be seen to be as follows:

1. An achievement of clarity of thought as to their own personal and immediate problems and primarily the problem as to their objective in service. This is to be done through meditation.

2. The development of sensitivity to the new impulses which are flooding the world at this time. This is to be brought about by loving all men more and through love and understanding contacting them with greater facility. Love reveals.

3. The rendering of service with complete impersonality. This is done by eliminating personal ambition and love of power.

4. The refusal to pay attention to public opinion or to failure. This is done by the application of strict attention to the voice of the soul, and by an endeavour to dwell ever in the secret place of the Most High.

Where, however, there is steady growth, an application to occult principles so that definite changes are produced in the bodies used, and an increasing radiatory light, it is known and recorded, and the aspirant is rewarded by increased opportunity to serve his fellowmen. They do not reward by commendation, by patting on the head, or by expressing their pleasure in words. They are occupied in making knowers and masters out of everyday men and women by:

1. Teaching them to know themselves.

2. Setting them free from authority by awakening interest and enquiry in their minds, and then indicating (not more than that) the direction in which the answer should be sought.

3. Giving them those conditions which will force them to stand on their own feet and rely on their own souls and not on any human being, be he a beloved friend, teacher, or a Master of the Wisdom.

THE GREAT INVOCATION

From the point of Light within the Mind of God
Let light stream forth into the minds of men.
Let Light descend on Earth.

From the point of Love within the Heart of God
Let love stream forth into the hearts of men.
May Christ return to Earth.

From the centre where the Will of God is known
Let purpose guide the little wills of men—
The purpose which the Masters know and serve.

From the centre which we call the race of men
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out.
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.

Let Light and Love and Power restore the Plan on Earth

"The above Invocation or Prayer does not belong to any person or group but to all Humanity. The beauty and the strength of this Invocation lies in its simplicity, and in its expression of certain central truths which all men, innately and normally, accept—the truth of the existence of a basic Intelligence to Whom we vaguely give the name of God; the truth that behind all outer seeming, the motivating power of the universe is Love; the truth that a great Individuality came to earth, called by Christians, the Christ, and embodied that love so that we could understand; the truth that both love and intelligence are effects of what is called the Will of God; and finally the self-evident truth that only through humanity itself can the Divine Plan work out." (Alice A. Bailey)

Philosophies and Schools of Thoughts may be correct or even perfect if you wish to say, but total perfection lies beyond them within its own description. Scriptures are just the guidelines of the path but not the end. They should be followed to reach their entirety but the core of reality lies beyond them as well as the truth therein.

Shiva, The Destroyer and the Restorer



SHIV TATTVA

In Me the universe had its origin,
In Me alone the whole subsists;
In Me it is lost-Siva,
The Timeless, it is I Myself,
Sivoham! Sivoham! Sivoham!

Salutations to Lord Shiva, the vanquisher of Cupid, the bestower of eternal bliss and Immortality, the protector of all beings, destroyer of sins, the Lord of the gods, who wears a tiger-skin, the best among objects of worship, through whose matted hair the Ganga flows.

Lord Shiva is the pure, changeless, attributeless, all-pervading transcendental consciousness. He is the inactive (*Nishkriya*) Purusha (*Man*). Prakriti is dancing on His breast and performing the creative, preservative and destructive processes.

When there is neither light nor darkness, neither form nor energy, neither sound nor matter, when there is no manifestation of phenomenal existence, Shiva alone exists in Himself. He is timeless, spaceless, birthless, deathless, decayless. He is beyond the pairs of opposites. He is the Impersonal Absolute Brahman. He is untouched by pleasure and pain, good and evil. He cannot be seen by the eyes but He can be realised within the heart through devotion and meditation.

Shiva is also the Supreme personal God when He is identified with His power. He is then omnipotent, omniscient active God. He dances in supreme joy and creates, sustains and destroys with the rhythm of His dancing movements.

He destroys all bondage, limitation and sorrow of His devotees. He is the giver of Mukti or the final emancipation. He is the universal Self. He is the true Self of all creatures. He is the dweller in the cremation-ground, in the region of the dead, those who are dead to the world.

The Jivas and the world originate from Him, exist in Him, are sustained and rejected by Him and are ultimately merged in Him. He is the support, source and substratum of the whole world. He is an embodiment of Truth, Beauty, Goodness and Bliss. He is Satyam, Sivam, Subham, Sundaram, Kantam.

He is the God of gods, Deva-Deva. He is the Great Deity-Mahadeva. He is the God of manes (*Prajapati*). He is the most awe-inspiring and terrifying deity,

Rudra, with Trisul or trident in His hand. He is the most easily pleased (*Asutosha*). He is accessible to all. Even the untouchable Chandalas and the illiterate rustics can approach Him.

He is the source of all knowledge and wisdom. He is an ideal Yogi and Muni. He is the ideal head of an ideal family with Uma as his devoted wife, Lord Subrahmanya, the brave general of strength and courage, Lord Ganesa, the remover of all obstacles.

Ganga-Vandana



(A Hymn to the divine river Ganges related to Lord Shiva and the water-cult.)

Aum namo maha Gangeshwari ,trailokya shuchikari
Kaldoss-hartri bhavtarini, tripath-gamini namastutey

I bow to thee, Oh! the Goddess Ganges .
Thou art the purifier of the three planes.
The liberator from the shackles of Satan.
Accept my salutations, Oh! treader of the three worlds.

Aum namo matar-jahanvi,Vishwa-murtey Bhagirati
Ganga gangeti pavni, maha mahimno namastutey

I bow to thee, Oh! mother Jahanvi.
Thou art the world-famous Bhagirati,
The purifying element of all the streams.
Accept my salutations, Oh! the Great One.

Aum namo nitya punya-datri, munishwari –mantreshwari
Pavitranee gatee-roopinee, mantra–vahini namastutey

I bow to thee, Oh! the bestower of charming boons.
Thou art the Regina of hermitage and of secret mantras.
The purifying agent and the force of mobility .
Accept my salutations, Oh! the vehicle of mantras*.
(*secret words / formula).

Aum namo shudhe mahashudhe,man–mohini tripur-sundari
Jai jai shiley shalinee, shubham–shubhangee namastutey .

I bow to thee, Oh! the purest of the pure.
Thou art the most charming divine beauty.
Glory to the modest and to the humblest One.
Accept my salutations, Oh! the good-looking and the gracious One.

Aum namo sursari divyani, Varuneshwari-Karuneshwari
Param pavnee Vishnu-padee, amriteshwari namastutey

I bow to thee, Oh! the celestial stream.
Thou art the Queen of waters and the most compassionate,
The divine fluid sourcing from the lotus feet of Lord Vishnu.
Accept my salutations, Oh! the nectarine Queen.

Aum namo jiwan-dayini, Bramha-kamandaleshwari
Mandakinee sidhanee, Shivam Shivanee namastutey

I bow to thee, Oh! bestower and activator of life.
Thou art the Brahman's (*Supreme Being*) pitch-dweller.

And the empowered celestial stream known as Mandakini,
Accept my salutations, Oh! Consort of lord Shiva.

Hindu Beliefs

It is difficult to assign a dogmatic orthodoxy to Hinduism. Many variations have developed from Hinduism over the years, and many non-Hindu cults and religious movements gained their inspiration from Hinduism. Even in India today, the most orthodox divisions of Hinduism have changed significantly over the last three thousand years.

One of the oldest aspects of Hinduism is as much social as religious, and that is the caste system. It is important to understand the caste system before delving into Hindu religious beliefs. According to Hindu teaching, there are four basic castes, or social classes. Each caste has its own rules and obligation for living. The elite caste is the Brahman, or priest caste. Second are the Kshatriyas, or warriors and rulers. Third are the Vaisyas, or merchants and farmers. Finally, the fourth caste is the Shudras, or labourers. Outside the caste system are the untouchables. The untouchables are the outcasts of Hindu society. Though outlawed in India in the 1940s, the untouchables are still a very real part of Indian society. One does not get decide his or her caste – that matter is decided when one is born into a particular caste.

As previously stated, there is not a strict orthodoxy in Hinduism. There are however, several principles that share a commonality among the various sects. Virtually all Hindus believe in:

- The three-in-one god known as "Brahman," which is composed of: Brahma (the creator), Vishnu (the Preserver), and Shiva (the Destroyer).
- The Caste System.
- Karma. The law that good begets good, and bad begets bad. Every action, thought, or decision one makes has consequences – good or bad – that will return to each person in the present life, or in one yet to come.
- Reincarnation. Also known as "transmigration of souls," or "samsara." This is a journey on the "circle of life," where each person experiences as series of physical births, deaths, and rebirths. With good karma, a person can be reborn into a higher caste, or even to godhood. Bad karma can relegate one to a lower caste, or even to life as an animal in their next life.
- Nirvana. This is the goal of the Hindu. Nirvana is the release of the soul from the seemingly endless cycle of rebirths.

Hinduism is both polytheistic, and pantheistic. There are three gods that compose Brahman – Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. Hindus also worship the

"wives" of Shiva, such as Kali, or one of Vishnu's ten incarnations (avatars). This is only the beginning. There are literally millions of Hindu gods and goddesses – by some counts, as many as 330 million!

At the same time, Hinduism teaches that all living things are Brahman in their core. In other words, all living things are Brahman, or god. Enlightenment is attained by becoming tuned in to the Brahman within. Only then can one reach Nirvana. The release from the wheel of life that allows access to Nirvana is known as "moksha."

Hindus recognize three possible paths to moksha, or salvation. The first is the way of works or *karma yoga*. This is a very popular way of salvation and lays emphasis on the idea that liberation may be obtained by fulfilling one's familial and social duties thereby overcoming the weight of bad karma one has accrued.

The second way of salvation is the way of knowledge, or *jnana yoga*. The basic premise of the way of knowledge is that the cause of our bondage to the cycle of rebirths in this world is ignorance. According to the predominant view among those committed to this way, our ignorance consists of the mistaken belief that we are individual selves, and not one with the ultimate divine reality – Brahman. It is this same ignorance that gives rise to our bad actions, which result in bad karma. Salvation is achieved through attaining a state of consciousness in which we realize our identity with Brahman. This is achieved through deep meditation, often as a part of the discipline of yoga.

The third way of salvation is the way of devotion, or *bhakti yoga*. This is the way most favoured by the common people of India. It satisfies the longing for a more emotional and personal approach to religion. It involves the self-surrender to one of the many personal gods and goddesses of Hinduism. Such devotion is expressed through acts of worship, temple rituals, and pilgrimages. Some Hindus conceive of ultimate salvation as absorption into the one divine reality, with all loss of individual existence. Others conceive of it as heavenly existence in adoration of the personal God.

Meditation

A Brief History

Although there's a paucity of recorded history on meditation, its roots travel back to ancient times. Researchers speculate that primitive hunter-gatherer societies may have discovered meditation and its altered states of consciousness while staring at the flames of their fires. Over thousands of years, meditation

evolved into a structured practice. Indian scriptures called “Tantras” mentioned meditation techniques 5000 years ago.



Buddha, one of history’s major proponents of meditation, and a major meditation icon, first made his mark around 500 B.C. His teachings were spread far and wide across the Asian continent. Separate countries or cultures adopted different forms of the word “meditation,” and they each found their own unique way of practicing it. Buddhist and Hindu based Eastern-style meditation practices are still the most popular today.

Meditation was spread to Western society thousands of years after it was adopted in the East. It finally started to gain popularity in the West in the mid-20th century. In the 1960s and 1970s, many professors and researchers began testing the effects of meditation and learned about its multitude of benefits.

Overview of Physical Postures



Different spiritual traditions, and different teachers within those traditions, prescribe or suggest different physical postures for meditation. Sitting, supine, and standing postures are used. Most famous are the several cross-legged sitting postures, including the Lotus Position. Westerners, mostly older people, use a straight chair.

Spine

Many meditative traditions teach that the spine should be kept "straight," that is, the meditator should not slouch. Often this is explained as a way of encouraging the circulation of what some call "spiritual energy," the "vital breath", the "life force" (*Sanskrit prana, Chinese qi, Latin spiritus)* or the Kundalini. In some traditions the meditator may sit on a chair, flat-footed (as in New Thought); sit on a stool (as in Orthodox Christianity); or walk in mindfulness (*as in Theravada Buddhism*). Some traditions suggest being barefoot, for comfort, for convenience, or for spiritual reasons.

Other traditions, such as those related to Kundalini Yoga, take a less formal approach. While the basic practice in these traditions is also to sit still quietly in a traditional posture, they emphasize the possibility of kriyas - spontaneous

yogic postures, changes in breathing patterns or emotional states, or perhaps repetitive physical movements such as swaying, etc., which may naturally arise as the practitioner sits in meditation, and which should not be resisted but rather allowed to express themselves in order to enhance the natural flow of energy through the body. This is said to help purify the “nadis” and ultimately deepen one's meditative practice.

Mudra/Hand

Bas-relief in Sukhothai, Thailand depicting monks during walking meditation. Various hand-gestures or mudras may be prescribed. These can carry theological meaning or according to Yogic philosophy can actually affect consciousness. For example, a common Buddhist hand-position is with the right hand resting atop the left (*like the Buddha's begging bowl*), with the thumbs touching.

Eyes

In most meditative traditions, the eyes are closed. In some sects such as Zen, the eyes are half-closed, half open and looking slightly downward. In others such as Brahma Kumaris, the eyes are kept fully open.

Quiet is often held to be desirable, and some people use repetitive activities such as deep breathing, humming or chanting to help induce a meditative state.

In Sufism meditation (*muraqaba*) with eyes closed is called Varood while with open eyes is known as Shahood or Fa'tha.



Focus and Gaze

Often such details are shared by more than one religion, even in cases where mutual influence seems unlikely. One example would be "navel-gazing," which is apparently attested within Eastern Orthodoxy as well as Chinese qigong practice. Another would be the practice of focusing on the breath, which is found in Orthodox Christianity, Sufism, and numerous Indic traditions.

Cross-legged Sitting

Sitting cross-legged (*or upon one's knees*) for extended periods when one is not sufficiently limber, can result in a range of ergonomic complaints called "meditator's knee". Many meditative traditions do not require sitting cross legged.

Meditation Basics

For folks with no experience or training in meditation, the information below provides a simple and basic introduction to Samantha (calm abiding) meditation. There are many different meditation techniques, and some of them can become quite arduous and advanced; but almost all meditative traditions begin with a mastery of calm abiding as the foundation for advanced practice. The information below is a good summary of what we would tell you if you walked into one of our meetings and asked us how to meditate.

Posture

- Sit on the floor with the legs crossed in the lotus, half-lotus, or standard cross-legged position. These positions are uncomfortable for many; alternatively, sit upright in a straight-backed chair. Meditation should not be painful.
- The back should be perfectly straight. Try to straighten out even the normal curvature of the spine. Imagine a string running through your spine and pulling up to keep it straight. If you're sitting in a chair, do not lean back against the chair-back; only the base of the spine should be touching the back of the chair.
- Your shoulders should be straight and level, but without any tension.
- Place your hands in the position of meditative equipoise: The right hand is placed in the left hand, palms upwards, with the tips of the thumbs slightly raised and gently touching. The hands are held 4 - 5 inches below the navel. Alternatively, place your hands on your knees, with the fingers pointing downwards.
- Your head and neck should be slightly bent forward with the chin tucked in.
- In most meditative traditions, the eyes are closed. In some sects such as Zen, the eyes are half-closed, half open and looking slightly downward. In others such as Brahma Kumaris, the eyes are kept fully open.
- The mouth is held in a normal position, neither too tightly closed nor too loosely open, with the tongue held against the palate behind the teeth.

A Simple Relaxation Exercise

Before beginning the meditation, it may be helpful to perform this simple relaxation exercise to help settle the mind and the body:

Assume the meditative posture as described above, and take a very deep breath, forcing the breath to fill and settle in your abdomen.

Hold the breath as long as you can and then release it slowly. As you release the breath, relax your body and visualize all your physical and mental tensions and attachments being expelled with the exhalation.

Do this three times.

Breath-Counting Meditation

The most basic technique in Samantha, or calming meditation, is the breath-counting technique. Using this technique, you simply breathe normally and naturally, silently counting each inhalation and exhalation:

Breathe in ... count 1
Breathe out ... count 1
Breathe in ... count 2
Breathe out ... count 2
Breathe in ... count 3
Breathe out ... count 3

Continue in this way until you reach a count of either 7 or 10, and then start over again at 1.

The purpose of the counting is to give your mind a definite object on which to focus. One thing you will almost certainly notice in the beginning is how difficult it is to stay focused on your breath and your counting. Thoughts and mental distractions will inevitably arise and disrupt the exercise. When these distractions arise, simply notice them and let them go, and then return to the count, starting over at stage 1. You should not become frustrated or disappointed when your mind wanders from the count, as this is a perfectly natural occurrence. Just recognize the thought that has arisen, let go of it, and return to the count. You will notice that the longer and more frequently you practice, the less often that your thoughts intrude on your meditation.

Awareness of Breath Meditation

When you feel like you have mastered the breath-counting technique, you can drop the counting and just pay attention to your breathing. Notice the breath as it enters your nostrils, and travels down your throat into your lungs. Notice how your abdomen rises with each inhalation. Do the same thing as you exhale: Notice how your abdomen falls and feel the breath as it leaves your nostrils. At

any time, if you feel like you're becoming too distracted, return to the counting until your mind settles once again.

Mantra Recitation Meditation

The silent repetition of a mantra is another popular technique. The Transcendental Meditation technique involves the repetition of a "personalised" mantra; in Buddhist meditation, there are a number of mantras to choose from. Simply repeat the mantra over and over silently to yourself; when a thought arrives to interrupt the recitation, simply notice the thought, let it pass away, and resume the recitation. Examples of Buddhist mantras include:

> OM AH HUM (Basic seed syllables which can be recited individually or together)
> OM MANÉ PADME HUNG (Mantra of Chenrezig, Boddhisattva of Compassion)
> GATÉ GATÉ PARAGATÉ PARASAMGATÉ BODHI SVAHA (Prajnaparamita Heart of Wisdom Mantra)
> OM AH HUNG BENZAR GURU PEMA SIDDHI HUNG (Vajra Guru Padmasambhava's Mantra)

For those uncomfortable with the Sanskrit mantras, repeating the simple phrase "CLEAR MIND" can be an effective alternative.

The Meditation Session

Most teachers recommend meditating for 15 - 20 minutes once or twice a day. If you can accommodate two twenty-minute sessions every day, you will be surprised very quickly at the benefits you see. Unfortunately, many of us have difficulty with that type of schedule, so do not feel bad if you can't meet that goal. For beginning meditators especially, twenty minutes can seem like an eternity, so some teachers suggest that you start with a 5 - 10 minute daily meditation, and then work up to longer and more frequent sessions. The important thing is to just give it a try. You cannot master the techniques or experience the benefits of meditation with just one attempt. If you're interested in really experiencing meditation, you should commit yourself to a daily meditation session (*even a short one)* for at least a week or two, before judging the experience for yourself.

Shiva, the Supreme God



Shiva is one of the most widely known and revered Hindu gods. In fact, Hinduism can generally be broken down into two groups; those that consider Shiva to be the Universal god, and those that consider Vishnu or his Avatar Krishna to be the supreme deity.

Shiva is one of the Supreme Trinity of Hinduism (*Bhrama, Vishnu and Shiva*), with the gods Brahma (*the Creator*) and vishnu (*the sustainer*) thought to be the others. It is believe that Lord Shiva evolved from the earlier Hindu God Rudra, and is normally associated with destruction. However, he is also associated with reincarnation, since in Hinduism death is believed to be a necessary step for rebirth.

Shiva is the God of destruction. He is married to Goddess Parvati (Uma). Lord Shiva not only represents the supreme state of perfection in man, but in his very pose indicates the way to reach it as well. His eyes are half-closed. It is called Samabhavee mudra. It signifies that his mind is absorbed in the inner Self while his body is engaged in the outer world. The state of meditation shown in Shiva's posture is again symbolic. Meditation is the final gateway to self realization.

On the auspicious occasion of Mahasivaratri, Shiva performs the ecstatic dance of realization. The dance pose Shiva is known as Nataraja. Shiva is said to have

the third eye known as gyana chaksu - means eye of wisdom and its vision reaches beyond that of two mortal eyes.

Shiva is sometimes shown with his trident (trisula) in his hand. The trisula is the three pronged weapon which symbolizes the destruction of the ego with the three-fold desires of the body, mind, and intellect.

But Shiva has different aspects that appear at different times. Shiva is often depicted as the destroyer, and will appear as a naked ascetic accompanied by demons, encircled with serpents and necklaces of skulls. Sometimes Shiva wanders into crematoriums, smears his body with ash and dances in the light of the funeral pyres, reminding all about the transitory nature of material things.

The God/Goddess Shiva is the destructive aspect of the Supreme Trinity. His consort is Parvati. His sons are Skanda, the commander of the army of Devas, and Ganapati, who is also known as Vinayaka.

Shiva resides with his friends and followers in Kailasa. His followers are called Ganas, and his mount is Nandi, the divine ox. The Paishachas are also said to be his followers. He wields a bow called Pinaka , and is hence called Pinakapani.

Shiva is one of the most important and popular gods/goddess of India. The Shiva Purana regards him as performing the triple functions of creation, protection and destruction. He is also identified with the Vedic god, Rudra.

In the cosmic waters, atop a blooming lotus, sits Shiva. He is shown with five heads and ten arms. The artist has used different colours for the faces, but what remains constant is the peaceful countenance and the serpents forming the pinnacle of the karanda mukuta. The serpents are closely associated with Shiva. They earn a place of pride coiled around his neck and other parts of the body. Serpents also represent Kundalini, the supine energy at the base of the spine. The hands of Shiva holds weapons of destruction, justifying his role in the Hindu Trinity as the Destroyer.

The foreground has brilliant colours of pink and green but the colour palette subdues as it goes up, ending in the background that is a calm mix of ochres and browns, the apparent distinction between the two being quite stark.

His first wife was Sati, the daughter of Daksha. She committed suicide when her father insulted her husband. He then became a recluse, spending all his days in meditation. The Gods were worried, for only a son born to Shiva could slay Taraka, the Asura. On the advice of Lord Brahma, the sent Kama, the God of love to make Shiva fall in love with Parvati, who was Sati reincarnated as the daughter of Himavan, the King of mountains. Kama suceeded, but Shiva,

angered by the deception, burned him with his third eye. He later restored him to life, heeding the prayer of Rati, the consort of Kama.

Shiva is the Supreme God in Yoga . We can see him as the symbol of a victorious yogi. Shiva has a cosmic consciousness. He lives above the world of duality. Shiva as cosmic consciousness can occur in many forms. The most famous incarnations of Shiva are the meditator (the practicing yogi), the blessing (*the karma yogi*), the ego sacrificer (*subordinated under the goddess Kali*), the dancer (*with the life*) and the lover (*Shiva and Shakti hand in hand or in sexual union*). Shiva is the master of life. He lives his life with the five elements / features of love (*earth*), joy (*air*), wisdom (*water*), strength (*fire*) and resting (*space, cosmos*). He lives at the right moment the right property. He sees himself as the winner and becomes a winner. He is programmed in success. At the same time Shiva is always aware that he is a beggar in the Supreme, nothing in the size of the cosmos, an egoless wanderer through the life.

- **1. The Winner**: We shake the fists near our head and think: "I am a winner. I reach my goal. ... My goal is...."
- **2. The Strong:** We rub the feet on the ground and visualize the Mount Meru among us, "I'm sitting on the Mount Meru (*Himalaya Mountains*). I maintain equanimity in pain. I'm going with perseverance my way."
- **3. The Egoless:** We make large circles with our hands around us, visualize the cosmos full of stars and think, "I live in the great system of the cosmos. I let go of my own will. I take things the way they are."
- **4. The Hatha-Yogi:** We visualize within ourselves the Kundalini Serpent, twist in the spine, move our toes and think: "I am a Hatha Yogi. I walk the path of Hatha Yoga. I save myself with my spiritual exercises."
- **5. The Karma-Yogi:** We move our hand, send all beings light and think, "I am a Karma Yogi. I help all beings. I send light to...". Shiva means "The Good". He sees himself in all his fellow beings. He wants all his friends to be happy. He works for the goal of a happy world.
- **6. Master Yoga:** We rub the palms before our heart chakra, visualize the sky above us and think, "Om all enlightened masters. I ask for guidance and help on my way."
- **7. Shiva Picture:** Concentrate on a picture or a statue of Shiva. Move one hand and take the energy from Shiva. Think several times the mantra "Om Namah Shivaya" (*I connect myself with Shiva*) or "Shivo Ham" (*I am Shiva*) and feel how the energy of Shiva flows with the mantra in you.
- **8. Meditation:** We put our hands in the lap, move your toes and think the mantra "Om Shanti" (*inner peace*) in the belly, "Om Shanti, Om Shanti, Om ..." Then we stop a minute every thought. We spend some time relaxing in meditation and then come back. We are a positive dancer with the live.

Important to note that, sometimes the creative force of Shiva is depicted, and in particular Shiva is represented by a phallus, known as the lingam. Other times Shiva is seen in statues as the god of meditation and asceticism. He will be depicted sitting cross-legged with his eyes half-closed.

Another common form is that of Dancing Shiva Nataraja. This is Shiva engaged in a cosmic dance. It is believed that the energy from this dance sustains the cosmos, and when Shiva is finished with this dance, this universe will end and a new one will begin.

Two Important Symbols of Shiva

Shiva Symbols

Snakes are often associated with Shiva, since they are able to regenerate their skins by discarding their old ones. Likewise, in southern India, deer are associated with Shiva because their antlers re-grow after falling out. Shiva is also associated with the rainy season, as the monsoon rains transform the ground from dessert into vertile valley.

The Weapons of Shiva

Many Hindu Gods and Goddesses carry weapons, and Shiva is often depicted carrying a trident, and the three tips of this weapon represent the creation, protection (or sustaining), and destruction of the universe. He might be carrying an axe, which is to symbolize the severing of ties to the material world.

MAHA MRITYUNJAYA MANTRA - ITS MEANING

Aum Trayambakam Yajamahe,
Sugandhim Pushtivardhanam;
Urva Rukamiva Bandhanaan,
Mrityor Mokshiye Maamritat.

OM triyambakam yajāmahe sugandhim pushTivardhanam,
urvārukamiva bandhanān mrrityormokshiya māmrritāt.

Summary of the Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra

We worship Shiva - The Three-Eyed (*tryambakam*) Lord (*yajamahe*);
Who is fragrant (*sugandhim*) and nourishes (*pushti*) and grows (*vardhanam*) all

beings.
As the ripened cucumber (*urvarukamiva*) is ~~automatically~~ liberated (*bandhanaan*) (by the intervention of the "farmer") from its bondage to the creeper when it fully ripens;
May He liberate us (*mokshiya*) from death (*mrityor*), for the sake of immortality (*maamritaat*).

We pray to Lord Shiva whose eyes are the Sun, Moon and Fire
May He protect us from all disease, poverty and fear
And bless us with prosperity, longevity and good health.

The Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra is a prayer to Lord Shiva (*part of the Hindu trinity, the lord of destruction, penance and meditation*) for help in overcoming "death". The seeker is more concerned with avoiding spiritual "death" rather than physical "death". The mantra is a request to Lord Shiva to lead us to the mountain of meditation, which is indeed Lord Shiva's abode. Legend has it that Lord Shiva appeared before his devotee Markandeya (who was destined to die at the age of sixteen) and stopped his aging process a few days before he was supposed to turn sixteen. Thus, death would never be able to claim him! Hence, this mantra is also referred to as the Markandeya mantra in classical hindu studies. The mantra should ideally be repeated 108 times, twice daily, at dawn and at dusk. It is particularly useful for meditation and yoga practice.

Spiritual Significance of the Shiva Mahamantra

Lord Shiva is referred to as *tryambakam*, the three-eyed one, because his third-eye has been "opened" by the powers of penance and meditation. The third eye is said to be located in the space between the eyebrows, and is "opened" when one experiences spiritual awakening. So, when we pray to Lord Shiva, we are in essence asking for his blessings and assistance in opening our third eye of spiritual knowledge. The natural consequence of this awakening is that we will be led towards spiritual liberation or *moksha*, and attain freedom from the cycles of death and rebirth. The goal of chanting this mantra is to spiritually "ripen" so that we can free ourselves, as Lord Shiva can free us from our bondage to all the material things that bind us!

Rules for Shiva Meditation

The ruler consciousness that truly see is empowered by pure rule of seeing what is capable of seeing the process of thought itself, once this process is recognized and turned back in to beholding the thought. So, the eyes of the ruler consciousness that see is purified.

So what is it that the master of meditation sees when the master of meditation look out from its eyes? What happens to the master of meditation when it sits in meditation? Who is it who is seeing? In what direction does the consciousness that see, move, and how can it shift it so that truth is realized? In meditation , the master of meditation is looking to go beyond the state of thought, all form, all characteristics beyond even the most subtle thought . This is a direct thought that is not dependent upon the five senses. One could say that the master of meditation now sees from the sixth sense -- a way of knowing that is not limited by time and space. Others say that this is realized when the evolutionary creative energy of the master of meditation, has become activated and has reached the conscience.

The real seer is the consciousness that see, which is engaged in the rule of seeing or consciously experiencing only. This consciousness of all living beings of natural world is absolutely pure and is beyond any thought or form. The the ruler consciousness that see of living being that reside beyond interior end of one conscious mind of all living being of natural world is not an object or subject to be seen. It is not a sight or form that can be seen or vision. It is without form. It is only the pure act of feeling, experiencing and realization of spiritual knowledge. It does not do anything by itself. It does its feeling, experiencing or realization of spiritual through one conscious mind of living being of natural world that is pure qualities of nature . It can neither make a sight or insight vision of self by itself. It is a seer and an absolute consciousness.

The rule of seeing that is the exterior part of the consciousness that see, is the almighty, fear free, enmity free, imperishable, and indestructible and not subject to birth and death. It possesses all the qualities of God and possesses all the powers of true feeling and experiencing and insight vision of spiritual knowledge. The consciousness that see and its rule of seeing, lives forever in love. It lives forever and in the present. The consciousness that see and its rule of seeing, lives forever in a stable condition. It lives forever without being subject to birth and death. The consciousness that see and its rule of seeing, lives forever in an omnipresent state. The consciousness that see and its rule of seeing, is a formless storehouse of cosmic energy and spiritual knowledge and lack of spiritual knowledge for exterior true nature or its creation and continuation of the existence of matter world. The interior consciousness is a

cosmic power, which does the true vision. The vision it sees, feel and realize and the vision it sees is that of nature spread in surrounding natural world. This is because it has no shape or form of its own and is centre of all creation of living being and non-living being in natural world .

Really the consciousness of all living being of natural world is one and is exterior part of soul . Whatever shape or form it has, is even beyond the formless. The consciousness is without form and non-dual one. The interior consciousness cannot be seen or vision. Whatever the enlighten consciousness try to vision it is of true and formless subtle nature and vision is fixed in consciousness itself, no vision is experienced or realized. In such true situation, the enlighten consciousness just glow with true spiritual knowledge and true qualities of the Divine, the Supreme, Cosmic Energy .

Really “consciousness” is forever visionary in cosmic fragrance of tranquillity, serenity, quietness, calmness and peace. When the interior consciousness sees or feels or realize or vision, it is then that the embodied consciousness sees and the person’s conscious mind sees in matter world. It is then that the person’s conscious mind experiences and becomes conscious of the nature’s endless matter forms or body of living beings in natural world. It is then that the human mind becomes conscious of one or the other four states of nature and its endless creation of living and non-living forms. Really it is with glow of consciousness that conscious mind of human being gets a vision of feeling and realization of the four states of nature and the cosmic rules and unconscious mind think endless forms and see, smell, taste, touch and hear endless matter forms of natural world.

The embodied consciousness is the pure absolute self- consciousness. He is cognizant of all thoughts. The embodied consciousness's true nature is to have a melody and tranquillity vision of the various state of nature ; the nearest pure sights or vision of nature is the one Subtlest nature essence or conscious mind state of endless living being in natural world . It is covered by the subtle senses of living being and further by the living matter body of endless living being of natural world which are made up of subtle and matter elements or which are made up of a mixture of the subtle or matter elements of pure nature essence.

The sights of subtlest nature essence, which appear through the mind, are impure sights of endless exterior nature subtle and matter elements. The pure form of nature is only in its subtlest essence state. When the consciousness and nature essence do not conjunct and do not meet, it is then that the embodied consciousness feel, experience and vision the true sight of nature with the help of the pure conscious mind. The sight it experience, feel, realize and vision is absolutely pure.

When a living human being by stabilizing his body, breath and mind and during his seeded spiritual union consciously and directly tries to get a vision of interior nature essence, his ruler consciousness vision the nature's true essence, pure, subtle and matter state. When a living human being by stabilizing his body, breath and mind and in the state of seeded spiritual union becomes conscious of his conscious mind, his consciousness realizes through his conscious mind, the nature's pure formless and subtlest nature state. This state appears to be like a shadow of the visionary.

When a master of meditation experiences the waves of lingering past subliminal karma impressions arising out of his conscious mind during his discriminative or deliberative spiritual union and after he stabilizes his body and breath and shuts out the external senses, he feels through the concentration of his thoughts the true shadow of subtlest nature essence on the screen of his conscious mind. It is then that the yogi feels pure vision of the spiritual knowledge of shadow of subtlest nature essence. It is then that he feels the five subtle elements of nature or mixture they're of on the screen of his conscious mind.

When a living human being in a state of argumentative spiritual union and after stabilizing his body, breath and mind and by remaining in a state of complete silence, feels of material things or feels of his body, it is then that he realizes the spiritual knowledge of five matter elements of nature elements state or mixture there of. He realizes impure shadow of a pure sight on the screen of his conscious mind and he feels the form of subject or object what he sees. When a mind unconsciously thinks of nature's material things or sees the formless form of nature, he sees the impure sight on the screen of his unconscious mind. Distress is the unconscious mind is felt only in matter elements and impure external state of nature.

Rules for education of meditation says that when the consciousness's essence and nature's essence do not meet, the consciousness directly vision the formless true essence state of nature through the principle of proximity. The pure and formless subtlest essence state of nature is the pure nature of the consciousness. When consciousness's essence and subtlest nature's essence meet it is then that nature gets wrapped on the ruler consciousness. It is then that the ruler consciousness does not get a vision of the true nature essence.

What comes on the screen is the conscious mind of endless living being of nature, It is due to self-ego and lack of spiritual knowledge that nature's vision is converted into thought and is experienced according to lingering past subliminal karma impressions by living being. This is in fact a glimpse of the unconscious mind of living being. Unconscious mind keeps on changing every movement after it attains one glimpse of nature essence.

When the conscious of a living human being is in the mind or in its thought or in the cravings of its thought of its distress or in the causes of the thoughts of distress, it tantamount to having the consciousness fixed on his self-ego and lack of spiritual knowledge. Whatever changes take place or whatever action is taken or whatever living or non-living being appears, they all are products of nature essence. The interior ruler consciousness realizes in proximity all this as its own static state. It realizes a vision of spiritual knowledge all these aspects of exterior nature essence and nothing else. The vision, which is true, is, however, become impure on being experienced and contemplated by the unconscious mind of living human being.

Rules for education of meditation: - Select any one spiritual form like Shiva & remain above any blind worship or superstition attached to Shiva. Meditate on Shiva with devotion regularly and consciously. Here is offered an icon of sacred image of Shiva Mahadev. While fixing attention on spiritual form of Shiva, hear Shiva, recite Shiva or remember name of Shiva repeatedly and continue to feel Shiva for 15 minutes or so. Shiva meditation could work as short cut medicine to feel Rules for education of meditation. It also improves learning Rules of meditation and absorption in meditation and makes mind refreshing. Shiva , great master of meditation is Symbol of interior profound meditation balance and ruler consciousness. Rules for education of meditation of Shiva is Lord of destruction and restoration as part of the trinity cosmic powers of nature essence that are tranquillity, action and inactivity. Shiva is Lotus-seated upon a tiger skin.

The third eye of Shiva is focused in self consciousness in true meditation pose, Shiva demotion and action oversees the creation and disintegration of living being of the material natural world . From Shiva matted locks springs the life of Ganges, symbolic of fertility and purification and Rules for education of meditation. Shiva serpent necklace implies the self-ego of life force that underlies all being. A Dravidian epoch Green Man, Shiva's worship predates 5000 BCE. The crescent moon in hair of Rules for education of meditation and trisula markings on forehead of Rules for education of meditation signify his full consciousness towards Rules for education of meditation.

Feats of Shiva Meditation

1. Liberates from psychosomatic disturbances or uneasiness.
2. Stills the wandering thoughts or tranquilize the upset mind.
3. Cleanses the polluted mentality and mends retarded development.
4. Cultivates the mind and enhances good relationship with the body.
5. Clarifies divine insight and increases positive awareness.
6. Gives clarity of mind and fosters transcendental peace.
7. Relieves from all lodging physical and mental fatigue.
8. Fosters positive stamina and widens self-confidence.
9. Recharges the psyche to handle daily responsibilities.
10. Offers the recipient the ready-ness to tap the divine grace.
11. Reduces and eliminates evil qualities or tamo-gunas inwardly.
12. Dispels ill-thoughts and eliminates bad habits gradually.
13. Unveils the inner self and cures even the unapparent ills.
14. Reveals the divine qualities (*sato-gunas*) from within oneself.
15. Develops positive attitudes and improves better creativity.
16. Awakens intuitive awareness and healing powers secretly.
17. Discloses past impressions to dispose the undesired ones.
18. Exposes graceful personality and illuminates blissful serenity.
19. Showers love, compassion and wisdom night and day.
20. Inculcates harmonious and peaceful living within family and society.
21. Enhances vegetarian-ship and offers everlasting divine radiance.
22. Consolidates desired disciplines and allows better self-control.
23. Bestows holistic health and self- transformation for a better life-span.
24. Opens the highway of spirituality and discloses avenues of mysticism.

Meditation Outline 1

SHIV YOGA SADHANA: MEDITATION ON LORD SHIVA

NIRGUNA MEDITATION: This is meditation on Lord Siva, in His all-pervasive, unmanifested aspect, as the Supreme Para Brahman. In this form of meditation, you meditate on Lord Siva as the Supreme Brahman without form, attributeless, eternal, infinite. Meditate on Him as the Suddha, Satchidananda, Vyapaka Atman; Nitya, Suddha, Siddha, Buddha, Mukta, eternally free Brahman; an unlimited Ocean of Pure Consciousness. Now, identify yourself

with this transcendental Svarupa of Siva. Feel that you are Chaitanya, Akhanda, Paripurna, Ekarasa, Santa, Unchanging Existence.

Every atom, every molecule, every nerve, vein, artery, should powerfully vibrate with these ideas. Lip-repetition of 'Sivoham' will not produce much benefit. It should be through heart, head and soul. This feeling should be kept up continuously. Negate the body-idea while repeating Sivoham mentally. When you chant Sivoham feel:

Infinity I am	Sivoham Sivoham
All light I am	Sivoham Sivoham
All joy I am	Sivoham Sivoham
All glory I am	Sivoham Sivoham
All power I am	Sivoham Sivoham
All knowledge I am	Sivoham Sivoham
All Ananda I am	Sivoham Sivoham

Meditate on the above ideas constantly. Constant effort with zeal and enthusiasm, is an indispensable requisite. Repeat mentally the above ideas incessantly. You will realize.

Meditation Outline 2

Empowerment Meditation

This meditation is based on chakras and their respective colours to gradually awake the greater consciousness to enhance a meta-physical experience and to foster the general well-being of the self.

One may sit in the direct moonlight around 9.00 p.m. from the 5th. day of lunar calendar up to the full-moon or at least on the 14th day of the waxing phase of the moon. Do not forget to cover yourself well in cold weather. Sit inside on other days if you wish to avoid the cold of the winter-night.

While sitting cross-legged put both hands apart with palms upward on the knees and visualize that you are holding separately the rotating discs of the Sun and the Moon full of energy. The right hand holds the Sun and the left hand holds the Moon. Start feeling the presence of the clockwise rotation of the circular energy. When the circular movement of the energy is felt abundantly in both hands and keeps going-on independently, just sit breathing deeply for another

moment with the rotating lunar and solar energy in front of you emanating from your hands.

Sit comfortably to plunge into the meditation, preferably cross-legged with the palms facing the sky on top of your knees, open to the circulating energy mentioned above or the forces of the nature. Visualize the base-chakra or the sacral plexus (*muladhar chakra*) in between the anal and the genital region, flashing or rotating with the red colour which represents the energy of the solid matter in the physical body. Allow the centre of the clockwise movement of the said energy in the hands to knock the base-chakra a few times then merge into the chakra together with the rotation of the planetary energy. Repeat the mantra "**lam**" three times with a longer resonance.

The second step is to move to swadhisthan chakra or the fluidal plexus in the pubic area and to visualize plenty of water element within oneself or outside enjoying amidst the streams or under the waterfalls. Undergo the maximum of purification in the light of orange colour and allow the centre of the clockwise movement of the energy to knock the flashing or spinning chakra a few times as above and then merge into the chakra with the rotation of the planetary energy. Repeat the mantra "**vam**" three times with a longer resonance for a few minutes.

Ascend upward to manipur chakra or igneous plexus around the navel to witness the fire element or the passive flame which burns the longing diseases or ailments and restore good health in the present life. All washed and spread in yellow should be accepted as the penetrating colour of the chakra. Allow the centre of the circular or clockwise movement of the known energy to move up the level of the navel while attending to the flashing or spinning nature of the chakra. Now merge into the chakra, with the rotation of the planetary energy while repeating the mantra "**ram"** three times with the same long resonance.

Continue the ascension this time to the solar plexus or the anahat chakra in the heart area accepting the greenish hue with the air element and allow the flashing or spinning movement therein. Here resides the divine force in the form of the chosen one within the size of the luminous thumb. This centre is known as the lodging place of the Great from where one can disseminate rays of love to every one and enjoy the same plentifully .See yourself and others as green entities in the colour of nature or life. Refresh abundantly the rotating energy and allow it to knock the present chakra a few times on its way while merging the rotation of the planetary energy as before and pronouncing the mantra "**yam"** three times with the usual resonance.

The fifth step of ascension is to find oneself in the sidereal plexus or the vishudha chakra at the root of the neck to meet the divine force in the form of the better-half. This plexus emanates blue colour and it is occupied by the

atmospheric or ethereal element. On visualisation of the flashing or spinning movement of the chakra, one gets the secret wisdom in the course of time. Allow the energy to circulate in front of you and knock the chakra a few times on its way and merge into the rotation of the planetary energy fully to pronounce the mantra "**ham"** at least three times with the same possible resonance.

It is a great experience to move further step upward into the lunar plexus or ajnan chakra in between the eyebrows to see the same circulating force. Consequently the insight is developed so beautifully that the scenes of roaming light-beings, saints or sages of the divine plane are visible. These saints, sages, mountains and rivers may appear in the organised dreams (*swapna-samadhi*) or normal dream-state also. Enjoying the prevalent violet colour and concentrating at this centre relieves one from the bondage of past karmas of even antecedent lives. Allow the constantly moving circular energy to knock the chakra while observing its flashing or spinning movement. The merging should be done as before and mantra "**aum**" is pronounced three times in resonance altogether. Now, repeat the ascension of the six chakras, pronouncing each mantra one by one while merging the related chakra, thus completing three rounds altogether before stopping or moving to the last one.

The next and the final stop takes place in the meta-physical area or space known as the crown chakra or sahasrar above the head from where one gets higher and higher to meet the apex of the invisible triangle. The lunar fluid or the enlivening ambrosia drops from the duplicating but inverted triangular edge amidst the thousand light-petals. The scenes are divine and extra-ordinary and the real trip of the unknown starts from here and takes another tour of meditation to the point of satisfaction. Visions of saints, sages, rivers and mountains do follow naturally. Imagine your hands up forming as the apex of the triangle and allow all the surplus energy to go free with all good intentions. End the meditation now as you feel sufficiently empowered. Do not extract the least energy from within yourself or the physical body.

Meditation Outline 3

Insight Meditation

Sit comfortably with the palms on the knees open to the sky after being already used to the technique of the empowerment meditation.

Bring your attention to the eye centre and start observing the luminous beings and their activities.

Accept them as they come forward even with ageless strange figures whom you do not recognize at all.

Stay among the light-beings as long as you may allow yourself.

It is difficult to communicate with them but you will no doubt be further divinized if you stay amidst them.

The longer you stay with them viewing their activities you will definitely do not remain the same but you will enhance your divinization to further extent.

The ability to see them for a while or longer is enough proof that you have already access to the metaphysical zone or the subtle world.

The figure or figures involved in the activities going on may also appear according to your faith and the level of divinization of your past lives and the present one.

You may easily grasp the amount of intuition from each complexion as it speaks but the truth for itself.

Saints, sages and ideal figures of your past lives may appear to reveal your lineage up to the present life.

Ascension of mountains or hills will notify your personal improvement into the field of spirituality.

Lakes, streams and rivers will all signify the state of your divine soul.

If you fly and fly above the streams, lakes, rivers and sea, one thing you may be sure that you have already crossed the grossness or the heaviness of your being to a great extent.
Paying attention to their divine activities or attending their strange or ideal movement
and beholding their sober figures will certainly create a divine state of mind.

This state of mind itself is not apart from the result of this insight meditation that gives equal harmony and almost all the benefits of nearly most of the meditations ever known.

The Sadhus or Hindu Hermits



Pilgrims at Kumbh Mela – Sacred bathing in the Ganges

Part One – General Knowledge

The common thread of thought in the religious beliefs of the Indian subcontinent upholds a single Reality (*as in absolute monism*) and holds in reverence each of the several manifestation of the Ultimate Reality in the forms of Gods. **Bhrama**, **Vishnu** and **Shiva** are revered as the Supreme Trinity of multitude of manifestations of Divinity. It is said that all that is true, all that is good and all that is beautiful is God (**Satyam Shivam Sundaram**).

Shiva is referred to as 'the good one' or the 'auspicious one'. Shiva - **Rudra** is considered to be the destroyer of evil and sorrow. Shiva - **Shankara** is the doer of good. Shiva is 'tri netra' or three eyed, and is 'neela kantha' - blue necked having consumed poison to save the world from destruction. Shiva - **Nataraja** is the Divine Cosmic Dancer. Shiva - **Ardhanareeswara** is both man and woman.

He is both static and dynamic and is both creator and destroyer. He is the oldest and the youngest, he is the eternal youth as well as the infant. He is the source of fertility in all living beings. He has gentle as well as fierce forms. Shiva is the greatest of renouncers as well as the ideal lover. He destroyes evil and protects good. He bestows prosperity on worshipers although he is austere. He is omnipresent and resides in everyone as pure consciousness.

Shiva is inseparable from **Shakti** - Parvati the daughter of Himavaan - Haimavati. There is no Shiva without Shakti and no Shakti without Shiva, the two are one - or the absolute state of being - consciousness and bliss.

The five mantras that constitute Shiva's body are **Sadyojaata, Vaamadeva, Aghora, Tatpurusha and Eesaana**. **Eesaana** is Shiva not visible to the human eye, **Sadyojaata** is Shiva realized in his basic reality (as in the element earth, in the sense of smell, in the power of procreation and in the mind). The **Vishnudharmottara** Purana of the 6th century CE assigns a face and an element to each of the above mantras. (**Sadyojaata** - earth, **Vaamadeva** - water, **Aghora** - fire, **Tatpurusha** - air and **Eesaana** - space).

The names of the deified faces with their elements are **Mahadeva** (earth), **Bhairava** (fire), **Nandi** (air), **Uma** (water) and **Sadasiva** (space). **Panchamukha** lingams have been seen from the 2nd century onwards. The **Trimurthi Sadasiva** image of Shiva in the **Elephanta Caves** near Mumbai is a portrayal in stone, of the five faces of Shiva. The fourth and the fifth heads are not seen in this image.

The works of sages Vyasa, Vasishta, Patanjali, the poet Kalidasa, the tamil saint poets Nayanmars - Appar, Sundarar, Sambandar, the poet Manikkavachakar, the mystic tamil siddhas, tantric philosophers, the spiritual leader Adi Sankaracharya and others such as Basavanna and Appayya Deekshitar speak of the attributes of Shiva.

Part Two – The Sadhus



Apart from their participation in the Kumbh Mela, Sadhus usually live rather solitary lives, renouncing society and leading a monk-like existence, with basic food provisions and few possessions. Most Sadhus wear distinctly coloured clothes, to set them apart from the civilian population, while a number of Sadhus decline to wear clothes altogether, as they all used to do traditionally. Their distinct clothing, or nakedness, symbolises their renunciation of the mortal world and their dedication to a new spiritual existence. In a similar vein, on becoming a Sadhu, the holy man renounces his old name and receives a new one, indicative of his affiliation. Most often, however, they are referred to by the term *Baba*, which means, *old wise man*.

The Sadhus spend their time in devotion to their chosen deity, the most popular of which is Lord Shiva, the Destroyer (*Shaivite devotees*). Vishnu, the Preserver,

or rather his incarnations (*Avatars*) like Rama or Krishna, are the other most followed deities (*Vaishnavite devotees*).

Followers of Lord Shiva, as well as of Lord Rama, may adopt Shiva's long dreadlocks. Lord Shiva is the longhaired god, who uses his long matted strands of hair, his powerful jata, to temper the potentially catastrophic force of the river Ganges - the goddess Ganga descending from heaven.

Apart from their differences in clothes, almost all Sadhus have distinctive markings painted on their forehead to demonstrate their allegiance to their sect and chosen deity.

Most Sadhus lead a life of austerity (*tapasya*) and a number wear heavy wooden and metal chastity belts to highlight their chastity. Some will go to extremes in self-inflicted suffering to speed up their way to enlightenment. The most unbelievable to watch are those who remain standing for twenty-four hours a day for years on end or who hold one arm aloft until all feeling is lost and the muscles atrophy, leaving the Sadhu permanently disabled.

Others believe in easier routes to enlightenment; viewing Shiva as the Lord of Hash, some strive to be permanently intoxicated. This results in a number of rather red-eyed Sadhus spending their days smoking marijuana, which is admittedly a little easier than standing for twelve years, and would explain why *smoking Sadhus* are in abundance.



Sadhus are at the heart of the Kumbh Mela. Apart from taking a holy dip in the Ganges, the aim of the Hindu pilgrims is to have the Darshan ("vision") of a Sadhu in order to receive their spiritual energy. Believers regard them as holy because of their radical commitment, and the most devout Sadhus are worshipped as *Gods on Earth*. Followers and disciples hope to gain spiritual merit or perhaps even enlightenment by touching the Sadhus' feet or listening to them - the ones not under vows of silence that is. Sadhus are also thought to transmit spiritual energy through Prasad. Pilgrims offer items such as food and flowers to Sadhus, and the ones not kept or sacrificed are distributed as *Prasad*, which literally means food from the Gods.

Tens of thousands of Sadhus will gather at the Kumbh Mela where the different Sadhu Akharas (*orders*) will maintain their own camping areas. In the past there was intense rivalry between the Shaivite and Vaishnavite sects, mostly about the order of precedence in the bathing processions, which sometimes resulted in bloodshed, and even today some of that competitive spirit still lingers.

The Aghoris

One of the most obscure and radical sects of the Sadhus are the Aghoris. Though one of the smaller sects, they are noted for their extreme behaviour. The Aghori philosophy is that by acting contrary to all Sadhu and general Hindu taboos they will actually speed up enlightenment.

This includes reversing even the most important of practices such as vegetarianism and abstinence from alcohol.

Although numbers of the sect have dwindled there are still many that carry out these age-old traditions.

The Aghoris are one of the principal Indian traditions and the most extreme and fascinating form of the Tantra. *Dattatreya*, a divinity that includes the *Trimurti Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Shiva*, are considered to be the founder of this school.

The sanscrit term *Aghora* is the combination among two words and has various meanings: *A* is a negation; *Ghora* is the obscurity of the ignorance, but it also means intense, deep; *Aghora* therefore means Light, absence of obscurity, awareness, but it also symbolizes a style of life where a person of the Aghori tradition doesn't have intense or deep feelings, it doesn't make difference among the various feelings, seems to be indifferent to the various stories of the life.

It is said that Aghoris drink liqueurs, smoke *ganja*, eat meat (in some rites also human meat); they use a human skull as a bowl, they wander among the funeral pyres, meditate at night and don't have any sex inhibition. This path seems to be detached completely from hinduist philosophies and it deceives the true nature of this little known reality in the indian sadhus (ascetics) panorama.

They are also known for their knowledge of magic arts; many people believe they owns magic powers and it is not difficult to hear histories of miraculous recoveries. Among the people, the word Aghori always arouses a mixture

between respect and suspect; anyway they also have many devotees among the various religion present in India. Together with an Aghori you can easily found hindus, sicks, muslims, jains, Christians or other.

In reality when we are together with these sadhus seems to be in front of a mystical crazy person, “The Fool” of the Tarots, all the rational thoughts seem to fade away for leaving place to an intense spiritual experience, over every duality.

The death's theme, so recurrent among the Aghoris, constantly remembers us our mortality but it is also a challenge to transcend the duality between life and death. Breaking every mental scheme, going over every taboo makes aware of the illusion of this world and becomes a path toward the liberation (*moksha*), the realization of the itself with the absolute one. Also the conventional Hindu distinction among pure and impure for the Aghoris is an illusion.

The site proposes to spread and to let know the Aghori culture too often misunderstood and stigmatized as one dark "sect". It doesn't absolutely want to make proselytism in accord with the conviction that any religion is pure illusion, fruit of mental conjectures and that in sum it estranges the man from the native spiritual message.

Juna Akhara, Warrior-ascetics

One of the most prominent Sadhu sects, the Juna Akhara, consists of the warrior-ascetics or Nagas (the naked). They smear their bodies with holy ash and sport long matted hair, symbolic of their devotion to Lord Shiva, generally known as the God of destruction, but to Sadhus better known as the Lord of Yoga.

The Nagas importance is emphasised at the Mela as they lead the millions of pilgrims in a procession to the sandy banks of the Ganges on the main bathing day.

The Naga Sadhus – part of a mysterious and secret society as we already know – are worshippers of Lord Shiva. Nag means ‘naked’ and they are also known as Nag Babas and Warrior-Ascetics. The mainly appear in public during the Kumbh Mela.

The order of Naga Sadhus was founded by Dattatreya and the date of founding is lost in time. Perhaps an age when humans never cared for time.

Shankaracharya first organized the Nagas to protect Sanatana Dharma (Hinduism).

They never bother about the materialistic world and practice celibacy to escape from the cycle of rebirth and to merge with the Brahman. As they belong to the Shaiva sect, they have matted locks of hair and their bodies are covered in ashes like Lord Shiva.

The Nag Babas are a warrior class and are divided like a regiment in an army. They have no fear of death and when Naga Sadhus are in anger the best option is 'to run.' Few people on the earth can face their wrath.

The trident, sword, stick, conch shells and other weapons and musical instruments they carry symbolize their warrior status. They smoke a maijuana pipe, known as a chillum or Shiv muli.

The place where the Naga Sadhus live is called 'Akharas.' The member of an 'Akhara' should always be ready for an intellectual fight and even for wrestling.

There is a long history of militant asceticism and the Nagas were recruited and organised into militant armed bands to defend the Hindus against the onslaught of the invading Muslims. Their performances at the Kumbh Mela recall their martial heritage with weapon and wrestling displays.

Bairagis

There are also militant ascetics who follow Vishnu, rather than Shiva, and these are called Bairagis. The regiments of militant Bairagis are similar to the Akhara organisations of the Nagas. Even though all bairagis wear clothing nowadays, some sections are also called Nagas, as they used to be naked in the past.

Though bairagis are well respected, the more important are the Shaivite Akharas, especially the Juna Akhara, this is illustrated by their leading role in the Kumbh processions.

Holy Women

Many Hindus believe that women must be reincarnated as men before they can reach spiritual enlightenment, but nevertheless there are a number of Goddesses, such as Kali, that Sadhus are devoted to. And there are also a number of female Sadhus, Sadhvis. These holy women are as respected as men, and often referred to as Mataji, *Revered Mother*.

Sadhvis are committed to celibacy and other ascetic practices, and so as not to complicate matters many have their own sub-sects and living quarters. However, some Sadhvis become disciples of the male gurus and perform Sadhanas (*hardships that bring one closer to the Supreme*) such as standing on one leg for an entire year.

Foreign Sadhus, not Westerners

These Sadhus are not Westerners who are flirting with Hinduism, or those seeking to pass their life in the company of a marijuana and chillum pipe smoking, but men and women who are devoted to their new way of life. The majority of Indian locals recognise this, and many view them as being as holy as Indian Sadhus. Some cover their bodies in ashes, adopt the same yoga positions and take the same vows.

An example is Rama-priya Das, an American who was a Sadhu for a number of years and has even reached the rank of Mahant, a head Sadhu. Apart from Americans, there are a number of French, Italian and even Japanese that have severed ties with their homelands in order to become Sadhus.

Westerners

It seems that not only has the number of foreign visitors to the Kumbh increased in recent years, but also some Westerners have taken their interest a step further, and have taken on the Sadhu role for life.

A particular Supreme Deity is characteristic of all Sadhus, but some express devotion in more unusual ways than others. The most conspicuous of these groups are the Sakhis, the religious transvestites, who believe they can only express their total devotion to a God by acting as his lover. Some Sakhis go to the extreme of improvising sex with their Lord, even avoiding that time each month they are on their improvised period.

For the majority of Sadhus, celibacy is the most important austerity, many wearing chastity belts for at least twelve years at a time. They consider that to repress sexuality and passion will intensify their spiritual energy. Nevertheless, Sakhis are recognised as a genuine, respected Sadhu sect as their only expression of sexuality acts as devotion to a deity.

An Introduction to Sadhu Meditation



Meditation is one of the most misunderstood disciplines practiced by the metaphysical, spiritual, and "new age community". This leads to a great deal of confusion and mysticification concerning the subject, it is not surprising. The attempt to define abstract concepts, even those that have practical application, often leads to **circular descriptions** and **observational definitions** that quite adequately describe an experience, but fail to isolate the principles involved.

Meditation is not just for monks and sadhus. The people who need to meditate the most are those who practice it the least. Meditation can turn your life around.

Meditation is not just for monks and sadhus. Sadly, the people who need to meditate the most are those who practice it the least while sadhus, who apparently seem engulfed in peace, meditate through the day.

Whatever the reason, stress seems to be a daily part of the lives of most people, and one of the most effective ways to combat stress is by meditation.

You do not have to be extraordinarily religious or spiritual to be able to mediate. And now that meditation is part of the ritual of prisoners at Tihar Jail, we know that you can meditate even if you are downright evil! All you need to know is how to do it.

Shut yourself in a room and let everyone know that you are not to be disturbed. Although aromatherapy oils are often prescribed to help calm you down, they are not needed, but if a certain scent relaxes you, by all means, use it.

Before starting meditation, set a timer, because you do not want to be constantly checking your watch to see how much time you have left. You will find it hard to meditate for twenty minutes at a stretch, so set your timer to seven minutes. Gradually work your way up to half an hour or forty minutes of meditation a day.

Realize though that meditation is not a super-act which will change your life around completely. But if you feel stress and other factors are hampering your career growth and your health, meditation can be the key.

Sit in a comfortable position with your legs crossed and your back, straight. (It doesn't have to be ramrod straight - at least, not initially - and you can lean against a wall for support.) You can sit on the floor or on a mattress, using cushions under any areas that feel uncomfortable. Remember that it is important you are comfortable in order to be able to relax.

The act of meditation itself is an inherent part of conscious awareness, and the dynamics involved are integrated with nearly every conscious process performed in both the mind and body. The practice is distinctive only when approached as a discipline. When meditation is studied from a practical viewpoint, it very quickly becomes evident to the practitioner how common this **tool of consciousness** is.

Proficiency in meditation has a very wide range of beneficial effects. Like an unused muscle, meditation takes practice in order to fully develop. Normal practice of meditation produces a more relaxed state of being, clarity of the thought, enhanced creativity, and reduced stress, to name only a few of the natural by-products.

While any act associated with relaxation and self-betterment is bound to produce results, misunderstood practices seldom lead to any real progress. In fact, with a surprising number of people, attempts at meditation often lead to a great deal of frustration which ultimately causes individuals to abandon the practice all together. In many of these cases, unrealistic or non-individualized expectations

inconsistant with real meditation lead to early disappointment. In other cases, a different approach may be needed based on pre-dispositions and personal apptitudes.

As an example, some people have an aptitude for sounds and music, while others have a natural aptitude for visual stimulation and imagery. It is rarer for an individual to have a natural aptitude for conceptual thoughts upon beginning any such study, let alone be able to comfortably reproduce and manipulate concepts, images, and other forms of vibration by concentration, held in mind.

Considering all of the above, it is therefore extremely wise to consider definitions, practices, and even the motive associated with the desire to meditate.

Imprecise, and even erroneous definitions are often formulated by those who have learned to successfully practice meditation who have then recorded the experience and attempted to expound upon the art-form for the benefit of others. In fact, it is hard to come up with a reasonable definition that isn't at least partly true and beneficial.

However, it is not until one works in the reverse order-- by studying root and primary principles of consciousness-- that a precise and crystal clear definition of meditation may be found.

Mastery of meditation is not possible without a real understanding of the science and application.

Of course, mastery of any discipline is not required for a beneficial effect. Obviously, various forms of meditation are consciously practiced-- and with wonderful results-- by a wide variety of people in every culture on Earth. The benefit of meditation has been documented by medical science, and meditation is commonly practiced by athletes, scholars, surgeons, teachers, actors, pain management therapists and psychologists, not to mention the multitudinous forms of meditation practiced by various religions and spiritual orders world-wide.

However, the only truly accurate definition of meditation as an actual conceptual idea that we have uncovered can be simply stated: Meditation: The Art and Science of Listening

The Science of Meditation involves the theories and methods involved to train the mind and/or the body in the discipline of listening. Learning the science of meditation is as simple as learning how to listen with the various senses of the mind and body. Like all sciences, there are operative and practical theories, proofs, and postulated theoretical suppositions-- even scientific equipment

available used to measure the physical effects of meditation. Meditation as a science, like all sciences dealing with the mind/body connection, is an emerging discipline in the modern world, and by no means completely explored.

The act of listening is intricately woven with the **act of concentration**. While meditation in its pure, conceptual form is **receiving** (feminine), concentration is the art and science of **focusing** (*masculine*). Therefore, both practices develop and utilize the conscious **will**.

The **conscious will** directs the **attention** (*awareness*) of the mind to focus, and having done so, enters a passive, but extremely aware, state.

If the science of meditation deals with the principles, practices, and theories behind the act of meditation, then the art of meditation simply involves **what to listen to**, **what to listen with, and why one should be listening**.

Since meditation is truly an inherent part of conscious existance, **one can listen to**:

A thought or an idea
An image in the mind
Music or other vibratory energy
The absolute silence
Nature
One's own body
Anything that can possibly be perceived by any sense

One can **choose to listen** with:

The five physical senses
The ears by hearing, the eyes by seeing, the nose by smelling, the nerves by touching
The Internal Mind (*coupled with the mind power of imagination*)
By some belief systems and standards, the extrasensory faculties, including the "third eye" and the "crown"

One of the most important considerations is the **motivating factor** behind the **desire** to meditate. The motivating factor will always influence one's understanding of the process, the process itself, and the results achieved. There is no right or wrong reason to undertake a study, but being precisely clear about the reason can greatly facilitate the experience.

Motives may be broken down into several main categories, with generalized examples given:

Material

Physical well-being (*including health, financial and social reasons*)

Practices such as Yoga, the soft martial arts, Qi Gong, & Zhan Zhuang Chi-Kung

Mental / Emotional

For Calmness, emotional difficulties, and creative practices such as the arts and mental clarity

Practices such as creative visualization, guided imagery, and audio "vibratory" meditations

Spiritual | Esoteric | Occult

True spiritual service, growth, and serenity | Study of Divinity and Nature | Power

Pure meditation, mental mastery | Taoism, Buddhism, etc. |

Obviously, the examples given above are not exclusive to any single pursuit, but presented as a conceptual guide.

It should be noted that there truly is a striking difference between meditation as a religious tradition (*taught and encouraged via a social structure*), and meditation as a spiritual pursuit (*chosen based on an inner conviction or burning desire*). The former is a material pursuit, while the latter is a spiritual one.

Seldom will an individual, without a prior disposition or outside influence, wake up one morning and choose any of the motivations associated with the mastery forms of meditation. The problem arises when an individual convinces oneself that a material or mental/emotional reason is actually a spiritual or esoteric one (*the occult viewpoint lies outside of our presentation*). This can cause difficulties in successful application, as there is a contention between an actual desire and an individual belief.

The most natural progression is an introduction to meditation based on a physical or emotional motive, which eventually evolves into a true spiritual practice. Of course, there are exceptions as well as those with an innate talent; however, these cases are always associated with rapid proficiency and without basic frustration.

Practically speaking, there are two primary types of meditation, active and passive.

Passive meditations come in many forms. A passive meditation is defined by the lack of creative participation by the practitioner. The primary idea in a passive meditation is to avoid creative, conscious interference in the process. As

an example, listening to a bubbling brook with a stillness of mind is a passive practice.

Active mediations (*see our beginners guide with an auditory meditation tutorial*) also come in many forms. An active meditation is defined by a requirement for creative participation. Many guided meditations include both active and passive elements. Relaxation methods via guided meditations, as an example, which walk an individual through relaxing different parts of the body usually contain both active and passive elements.

A third form of meditation which actually does not fit the purist definition of meditation results from the combination of passive meditation, active meditation, and a synthesis. This form of meditation is sometimes referred to as creative actualization, or creative meditation. This type of meditation is more closely associated with the principle of **contemplation**, but we do reach a point where any conceptual line drawn becomes inaccurate. Whenever an active element enters into meditation that involves conscious direction by the practitioner, the conceptual definition of meditation blurs.

An actualization is a perceived result of a mental action, whether the result is real or imagined, that is not a part of the original meditation components.

To give a practical example, guided relaxation and healing methods are taught in numerous consciousness growth programs. A student is often taken into a state of deep relaxation, and then guided through imagining a warmth, a light, or a vibration passing through different parts of the body. The practitioner is guided to imagine both the body parts, and the light/warmth/vibration. If, during this procedure, an unknown element is created as a result that was not a part of the original meditation, it may be an actualization, such as an "explosion of warmth" in the body, or a burst of light or electricity seen through the mind's eye.

Formal "Eastern" spiritual traditions tend to frown upon creative practices with meditation, while more modern "western" traditions tend to embrace it. This largely has to do with the fundamental purposes of the ideologies, and not as a moralistic consideration. Eastern traditions tend to focus on the transcendence of the material world, while Western traditions focus more on involvement with the material world. Both points of view have merit worthy of study.

In fact, the more that one studies meditation, the more that one can see how meditation is an intricate part of how the creative mind itself actually functions, by natural design. Taking the time to learn even the most basic forms of meditation can be a rewarding experience at all levels of life, and a simple study can be undertaken by anyone, regardless of religious or spiritual inclinations (*or lack thereof*).

Kundalini and Tantra

Part One

The Wild World of Tantra

Have you ever seen anyone praying his or her own portrait? You may think it's preposterous, but what about those few who do not believe in the Divine, the Supreme, Cosmic Energy personified in the God/Goddess Shiva, the Destroyer and the Restorer, and instead consider the physical self as the Supreme Reality? Here's a peek into the wild world of Tantrism.

Satifying the Self

There are some ancient Hindu texts, which emphasize the exaltation of the physical self more than anything else. The concept that arises out of this kind of devotion to self, forms the basis of what is known as tantra, and the followers of this 'crude side' of Hinduism are called tantrics. These people not only glorify the physical body but also go to any extent to satisfy the self to attain occult powers. Tantrism entails the antinomianistic or immoral way of gaining uncanny powers. According to Tantrism, it is through *bhoga* or satisfying desires that man can gain salvation, and he must do anything that he wishes to do, particularly those that are regarded sinful.

Origin of Tantrism

There are many disputes about its origins. Some observe that the Pre-Aryan Indians could have been the originators, others ascribe it to the tradition of primitive people. Whatever its remote origins may be, historically it can be dated about the time of the rise of Buddhism, because the later Buddhists adopted some of the Tantric symbols and have grown as a sect. Today, tantra is not practised widely in India, and survives mostly in the far northeast, amid the jungles and foothills of the Himalayas.

Life of a Tantric Sadhaka

A *sadhaka,* or person performing tantric acts, lives a simple life, practices yoga and meditates in the quiet of the countryside, far away from the madding crowd. He is distinguished by his saffron robe and begging bowl, or in some cases he

might go stark naked! He sells charms, amulets, 'magical' medicines and herbs. He sometimes gathers together with other sadhus to form vast processions during religious festivals. So much for the brighter side of a tantric. The darker half involves taking drugs, inflicting austerities upon himself, or doing certain things that outrage morality.

Tantra Teachings

Tantras, like the Vedas, are collections of verses suggesting elaborate directions for the right way to worship. They are generally esoteric, mystical teachings addressed to the *sadhakas*. Sex and the various postures of love-making form an important tenet of tantrism. There is an adolescent fascination about breaking the sexual code with women. Using obscene words, visiting prostitutes or seducing another man's wife is held conducive to acquisition of uncommon powers.

Kundalini: Serpent Power

Another way to acquire *siddhi* or occult powers, is by practising Kundalini or 'serpent power'. According to the tantric texts, a serpent lies in our crotch, extending to the rectum. To awaken it, one must perform certain yoga, which will gradually arouse it. Practising Kundalini uncoils the serpent and releases vast energy, which proceeds up our spine like hot liquid. The skin burns, we sweat and experience a stinging sensation. The siddhi attained through this method can be so powerful that it may destroy the person if not controlled. Kundalini rises and when it reaches its limit, there is complete bliss. And once the sadhaka reaches this goal he becomes a sadhu or sage.

Shri Gorakhnath

According to some legends all kinds of *bhoga* conglomerated in the person of Gorakhnath, a tantric of the eleventh century, who worked with both good and evil to gain magical powers. Also called Ghor Nath (from ghor, filth) or the 'Lord of Filth', because, as say legends, God created Gorakhnath from the sweat of his breast, Gorakhnath is often credited as being the founder of Kundalini Yoga and Hatha Yoga, and has many followers in India and Nepal.

Tantrics are wild people with ingenuous tastes, possessing an intense love of freedom of the will. They can be hailed as the predecessors of the hippie movement in America in the sixties, for they have much in common. It is particularly interesting to note that, in the 17th century British-India, when

tantrism was extant, the English were horrified to discover such a barbaric practice and tabooed it as a kind of obscene voodoo.

Obsession for the Female Form

For the tantrics, the object of devotion is not the male God, but his wife. They fanatically admire the woman form in all her aspects. The cruder the better. Their frenzy goes to the extent of abasing themselves before motherhood, the apotheosis of womanhood. The tantric devotee yearns for mother to take him on her lap. He craves for the security and warmth of her breasts.

Sex for Nirvana

Tantism upholds the view that the best way of being godlike is to have intense sex with a woman. Having sex to the point of utter exhaustion can attain nirvana. While meditating, it is usually the woman's sexual organs that arrest their concentration, especially when it is combined with the mental picture of penetration.

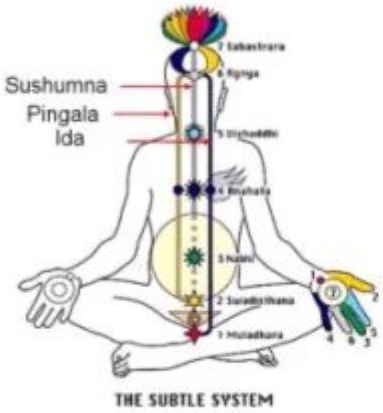
Gender Bender

One tantric sect believes that every human being has both the male and the female attributes within. Similarly, gods too have bisexual characteristic. A representation of Lord Shiva, at the Elephanta Caves, show the right side of the god being masculine, the left having a female rear and a breast. Another sect of tantrism opines that the male devotee, to complete himself, must think of himself as a woman. He should walk like her, talk like her, have her emotions, and dress like her. Some men, by nature, are more feminine than male and these are particularly holy. They are of several kinds: the eunuch, hermaphrodite, the neuter whose sex has dried up and so on. The devotee, in his search for sexual experience, can try out having sex with such kinds of people.

The orthodox Hindus shun and fear a tantric. He is detested and persecuted by the police, who considered him a charlatan, and an antisocial. Large tantric gatherings are banned. So, very little of it is left in actual practice. Nevertheless, its legacy cannot be ignored.

Part Two

Kundalini and Sex



The Kundalini orgasmic energy may rise toward the brain through either Ida, Pingala or Sushumna. For the energy to rise through Sushumna, Ida and Pingala have to be balanced through control of the Autonomic Nervous System. This can be done by breathing slowly with meditative awareness.

One factor that Sannella and Bentov do not discuss is sexuality. We have no laboratory evidence for asserting that sexual arousal generates a similar standing wave in the aorta, though we do know from modern sex manuals that orgasm can be defined in terms of heart beat. Nevertheless I find it more than coincidental that long before I had encountered Sannella's book I was aware of my own sexual arousal beginning in my feet and surging up through my legs, just as Sannella and Bentov have demonstrated for the arousal of kundalini -- although it is not spoken of in the accounts of Tantric experience I have found. Indeed, the surge of power that begins in the feet seems to run into an obstacle in the pelvis during an explosive orgasm, and becomes almost painful. In the case of a non-ejaculatory "implosive" orgasm, the surge goes beyond the pelvis and fills the trunk, drawing attention to the chest and finally seems to exit through the head.

The reader may wish to dismiss my account as idiosyncratic -- even to disbelieve my claim that I was aware of these bodily sensations before encountering Sannella and Bentov and therefore not due to my gullibility in the face of suggestion. Because sexual arousal is a universal human experience, however, I am inclined to believe that this sensation is not unique to me. In fact the surge through my legs was plain to me thirty-five years ago, and it was not until I reached my forties that I began to notice that the energy did not have to pool up painfully in my pelvis. "All pain is caused by ignorance by staying intentionally blind, when experience has already told us something different" (Sivananda Radha, 1990: 50). My attention had to be *drawn* to the fact that the energy could -- and in fact already did -- go further. An American Bhairavi who had received part of her training in India reported feeling my energy in *her* body, surging through her trunk and up through her head. At first this caused me

no little confusion. But because she had been right about everything else, I was induced to give some credence to her account.

The powerful sensations in our genitals arrest our attention so successfully that we often need to have more subtle experiences pointed out to us. The situation is analogous to observing the evidence of wildlife in the woods. The trained eye can see things that simply do not exist for the casual urban hiker. But once they have been drawn to our attention, our observations will quickly grow sharper and more differentiated. We will become aware of a whole world of activity that had formerly escaped our notice. It is a matter of attention. More precisely stated, it is a matter of interrupting the habitual internal monologue by which we maintain the world of the ego and persona field. In Vimalananda's view, the ego has to stop stealing the energy of kundalini for its own efforts to "remember."

The average person ignores the dictates of the divine prana's inner guidance. This is because modern man has allowed his pranic energies to be dissipated indiscriminately in sense and ego gratification. When prana dictates sleep, man will say, "I'd rather go to the movies." Where prana gives the signal for elimination, man will respond after he has finished some work. Thus he ignores and insults God's power that tries to function for his well being. Kundalini's awakening re-establishes these natural promptings and hence the higher natural disciplines become a way of life in a most effortless manner (Desai, 1990: 74-5).

Therefore, although Sannella and Bentov have not explored the sexual component in kundalini arousal, this does not mean it is not present. David Gordon White's research into the bodily experience of medieval Indian alchemists, *The Alchemical Body* (1996), serves us as the observations of a naturalist in our quest to open our eyes to a world that has long escaped our notice. The language is mythological. But its foundation resides in the physiology of the human organism.

Mythologically, the sleeping kundalini serpent is represented as coiled around an internal *linga* (phallus) at the base of the body cavity with her mouth over its opening; and as long as she sleeps, she drinks the semen that is lost by those -- both men and women -- who do not know how to waken her. She thereby is simply a "receiver" of pleasure and is "identified with the fire of time (*kalagni*) because the mortal who allows her to drain away his semen is doomed to be consumed by the fire of time and die" (D. G. White, 1996: 219). She is capable of *giving* pleasure only when awakened: "The yogin, in rousing her from her slumber, finds in the rising *kundalini* a vehicle by which to raise himself from mundane existence to a god-consciousness that renders him a second Siva" (*Ibid.*, 220). In this sense, kundalini is identified with the yogin's partner, and visualized as Shakti dancing on the supine Shiva. The wine, semen, meat, and fish (forbidden substances) that the yogin consumes feed the kundalini and

wakes her up. Her arousal reverses the entropic processes of the profane universe, those of aging and death, and enables the yogin to "experience liberation and bliss" (*Ibid.*, 220).

The awakening of kundalini corresponds to "the yogin's own withdrawal into yogic sleep or trance" (*Ibid.*, 221). This is the erotic trance that opens our eyes to the subtle plane and reveals to us that the transformation realized in our own body and consciousness (the microcosm) parallels a macrocosmic process: "the universal resorption of all mundane existence into the primal and primordial essence that is the Absolute, God" (*Ibid.*, 221).

These two poles of the *kundalini*'s mode of being -- sleeping and waking, taking and giving pleasure, allowing the body to be consumed by the fire of time and consuming the fire of time -- these mundane and transcendent poles are identified as her "poison" and her "nectar." The *kundalini* is poison when she remains asleep in the lower abdomen; she is nectar precisely when she rises up through the medial channel of the subtle body to reunite with Siva, the Absolute, in the yogin's cranial vault. In the hatha-yogic sources, this union is in fact accompanied by an outpouring of nectar, which renders the yogin immortal (D. G. White, 1996: 221).

When the medieval Indian alchemist claims that kundalini transmutes raw semen into nectar in the cranial vault, he means that the sexual arousal he feels in his body, surging up through his legs, does not have to pool up painfully in the pelvis to be released in the intensely pleasurable explosion of ejaculation. The natural ejaculatory response can be transformed through carezza. In this sense, carezza is a factor in the awakening of kundalini; for it is kundalini, alone, who "siphons upward the semen that had previously remained inert and subject to loss in the yogin's abdomen" (D. G. White, 1996: 233). Lilian Silburn's study of later texts from Kashmir reaches the same conclusion: "Actually the gap between the energy of pure Consciousness and sexuality remains unbridgeable as long as the `sinuous bodied Kundalini' lies motionless in the ordinary human being" (Silburn, 1988: 138). Furthermore, it did not escape the attention of those Indian explorers of kundalini and sexuality that women are more naturally endowed with an ability to raise kundalini and to be capable of implosive orgasms than are men (D. G. White, 1996: 200).

The concept and imagery of kundalini, therefore, is the most comprehensive and highly differentiated source of information regarding what we have called, following Evola, "erotic trance." Based on a universal physiological mechanism that can be demonstrated in the laboratory, it accounts for the transmutation of the natural spasm response into an "implosive" orgasm which is experienced as a surge of energy that rises at least from the base of the spine to the cranial vault, and very likely begins in the feet. In doing so, kundalini transforms our

awareness and opens our eyes to the subtle plane whereby we experience our own microcosmic identity as a reflection of the subtle reality of the cosmos at large:

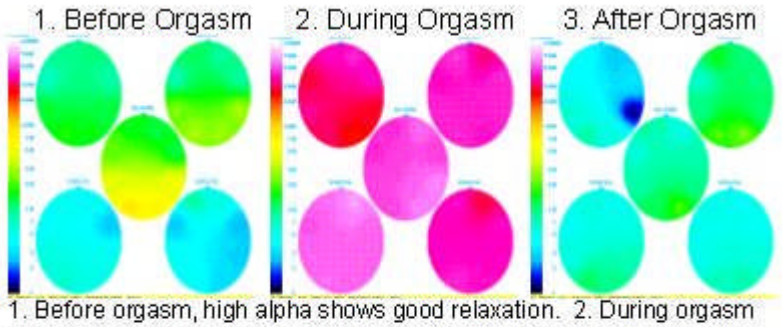
If then the preservation of the universe depends upon -- indeed, is nothing other than -- the endless cosmic orgasm of the divine, and if the bliss of orgasm is that human experience which is closest to the very being of the godhead, then the stuff of orgasm -- male semen and the female sexual emission and uterine blood -- will, of necessity, play a vital role in the tantric quest for divine autonomy, immortality, and power. . . . The guiding principle here remains one of controlling a universe that is understood to be a *body*, the body of the divine consort of Siva, the body of one's own consort, and the feminine in one's own body. . . . This body is at once a divine, human, and alchemical body, to be perfected through yogic, alchemical, and erotico-mystical practice (D. G. White, 1996: 138-9).

The idea that the cosmos itself is nothing other than the eternal love-play or orgasm of the gods is fundamental to most schools of Tantra, some of which will be discussed in later chapters. The follow example is selected from the myriad myths discussed by Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty in *Siva: The Erotic Ascetic* (1973). In this example the gods fear a transformation of the universe they cannot begin to contemplate as Shiva's lust (kama) is mixed with ascetic generation of heat (*tapas*). The love-play between Shiva and his consort Parvati lasts for a thousand years because ejaculation does not occur. The great danger feared by the gods is that eventually Indra will be replaced as king of the gods by the offspring of the union between Shiva and Parvati. This symbolizes the unthinkable transformation of the world that such an "implosive" and "continuous" orgasm can effect. At the level of human experience, it means that once Shiva and Parvati are eternally united in the implosive orgasm of the cranial vault the world of everyday experience will never be the same again. The realities of the subtle plane can effect unthinkable changes.

Siva made love to Parvati for a thousand years, disregarding dharma [the basis of morality and ethics], and the worlds trembled and the oceans shook. The gods were afraid, thinking, "Let us do something so that this act of love is not completed, for if it is then the son who will result from it will surely steal away Indra's place as king of the gods." . . . Indra, knowing that the union of the passionate Siva and Parvati might produce a child, and fearing the child that might arise from two so great in sexual powers, was frightened and sent Agni [the god of fire] to interrupt them (O'Flaherty, 1973: 269).

Notes on Sexual Activity

When you are sexually aroused, the Kundalini energy is activated. It rises up the spine, and as it approaches the brain, the sexual feelings become stronger and stronger. At this point, in most people, the energy reverses and takes a downward course seeking release though the genitals.



1. Before orgasm, high alpha shows good relaxation. 2. During orgasm there is a huge increase in amplitude of all major frequencies indicating an arousal of the Kundalini energy.All the chakras are activated and the energy is reaching the brain. 3. Immediately following orgasm, the brain shuts down the feelings, and the energy takes a downward course toward the genitals. All the brainmaps show averaged activity over 30 seconds.

When you are engaged in sexual activity, it's important that you relax and surrender completely to the feelings coming up. During this process there will be an increase of slow brain waves such as delta and theta waves seen on the middle brainmap above. The stronger the waves, the more orgasmic energy you can hold in consciousness before it travels downward and spills over in the body in the form of an ejaculation.

When you relax and open up during sexual stimulation, changes first take place in the etheric body. The Kundalini energy which is coiled up like a snake at the base of the spine in the root chakra starts to rise to higher levels passing through the chakras. Since Kundalini is the energy circuit in the etheric body (much as the blood vessels are the energy circuit in the physical body) the changes in energy initially take place in the etheric or emotional body.

Self-Development and Realization

The Sub-Conscious Mind

The sub-conscious is termed "Chitta" in Vedanta. Much of your sub-consciousness consists of sub-merged experiences, memories thrown into the background, but recoverable.

When you show symptoms of losing your memory, as you grow old, the first symptom is that you find it difficult to remember the names of persons. The reason is not far to seek. All the names are arbitrary. They are like labels. There are no associations along with the names. The mind generally remembers

through associations as the impressions become deep thereby. You can remember well in old age some passages that you had read in schools and colleges. But you find it difficult to remember in the evening a passage you read in the morning. The reason is that the mind has lost its Dharana-Shakti (*power of grasping ideas*). The brain cells have degenerated. Those who overwork mentally, who do not observe the rules of Brahmacharya and who are afflicted with much cares and anxieties, worries, etc., lose their power of memory soon. Even in the old age you can remember old events, as there are associations with events.

The mental processes are not limited to the field of consciousness alone. The field of sub-conscious mentation is of much greater extent than that of conscious mentation. Messages, when ready, come out like a flash from the sub-conscious mind to the surface of the conscious mind through the trap door in the sub-conscious mind or Chitta of the Vedantins. Only ten percent of mental activities come into the field of consciousness. At least ninety per cent of our mental life is sub-conscious. We sit and try to solve at a problem and fail. We look around, try again and again, but fail. Suddenly an idea dawn that lead s to the solution of the problem. The sub-conscious processes were at work. Sometimes you go to sleep at night with the thought: "I must get up very early in the morning to catch a train." This message is taken up by the sub-conscious mind and it is this sub-conscious mind that wakes you up unfailingly at the exact hour. Sub-conscious mind is your constant companion and sincere friend. Repeatedly fail at night to get a solution for a problem in arithmetic or geometry. In the morning, when you wake, you get a clear answer. This answer comes like a flash from the sub-conscious mind. Even in sleep it works without any rest incessantly. It arranges, classifies, compares, sorts all facts and figures and works out a proper satisfactory solution. This is all due to the sub-conscious mind. With the help of the sub-conscious mind you can change your vicious nature by cultivating healthy virtuous qualities that are opposed to the undesirable ones. If you want to overcome fear, mentally deny that you have fear and concentrate your attention upon the opposite quality- the ideal of courage. When courage is developed, fear vanishes away by itself. The positive always overpowers the negative. This is an infallible law of nature. This is Pratipaksha Bhavana of Raja Yogis. You can acquire a liking for distasteful tasks and duties by cultivating a desire and taste for them. You can establish new habits, new ideas, new ideals, new tastes and new character in the sub-conscious mind by changing the old ones.

The functions of the Chittta are Smriti or Smarana, Dharana (attention) and Anusandhana (enquiry or investigation). When you repeat a Japa or a Mantra it is the Chitta that does the Smarana. It does a lot of work. It turns out better work that the mind or Buddhi.

All actions, enjoyments and experiences leave the impressions in the sub-conscious mind in the form of subtle impressions or residual potencies. The Samskaras are the root of causing again Jati-life and Experiences of pleasure and pain. Revival of Samskaras includes memory. The Yogi dives deep inside and comes in direct contact with these Samskaras. He directly perceives them through the inner Yogic vision. By Samyam (concentration, meditation and Samadhi) on these Samskaras, he acquires knowledge of the previous lives. By doing Samyam on the Samskaras of others, the Yogi gets knowledge of there past lives also.

When you desire to remember a thing you will have to make a psychic exertion. You will have to go up and down into the depths of the different levels of sub-consciousness and then pick up the right thing from a curious mixture if multifarious irrelevant matter. Just as the mail sorter in the railway mail service takes up the right letter by moving the hand up and down along the different pigeon holes, so also, the sorter, (the sub-conscious mind), goes up and down along the pigeon holes in the sub-conscious mind can pick the right thing to the level of normal consciousness. The sub-conscious mind can pick the right thing from a heap of various matters.

A Samskara of an Experience is formed or developed in the Chitta at the very moment when the mind is experiencing something. There is no gap between the present experience and the formation of a samskara in the sub-conscious mind.

Smriti or memory is a function of Chitta (sub-conscious mind). It is a separate faculty or category in Vedanta. Sometimes it is Antarangata that comes under the mind. In the Sankhya philosophy it is included in Buddhi or Mahat Tattwa. The Chitta of Patanjali Rishi's philosophy of Raja Yoga (Yogas Chitta Vritti Nirodha) corresponds to the Anthakarana of Vedanta.

Memory Culture

He who dwells in the sub-conscious mind or Chitta and memory and who is within this memory, whom the chitta and memory do not know whose body is the memory (and sub-conscious mind), who rules the memory and Chitta from within is thy Self, Inner Ruler, (Immortal Atma, Antaryami, Amritam). My silent adorations and prostrations to this Inner Ruler!

Memory-culture is very important. It brings success in God-Realisation as well. A forgetful man always fails in his endeavours. The manager gets displeased with a forgetful clerk. A forgetful man commits serious mistakes again and again. A man with strong and retentive memory gets sanguine success in all his ventures and undertakings. He who has memory can conduct his business affairs very successfully, remember credits and debits and keep accounts in a

satisfactory manner. A student who has a retentive memory will get success in all his examinations. Intelligence is only nine-tenths of memory.

The Sanskrit term for memory is Smriti. Smarana is remembering. This is the function of the sub-conscious mind or Chitta. The Samskaras of thinking and acting are deeply impressed in the Chitta. The Chitta is like the sensitive plate of a camera. It is like the sensitive plate of a gramophone. All the impressions are indelibly recorded there. Whenever you make an attempt to remember the past events or things they come back to the surface of the conscious mind through the trap door. Just as the man enters the stage from the side curtains, just as the prisoner comes out of the jail through a small door in the main gate, so also impressions come out through the trap door in the form of big waves of thought or mental image. If you have a clairvoyant vision or astral eye, you can clearly watch all subterranean movements of these images in the subterranean workshop of the mind or the underground mental factory. The term memory is used in two senses. We say, "Mr. John has got a good memory." Here it means that Mr. John's capacity of the mind to store up its past experiences is very good. Sometimes you say, " I have no memory of that incidence." Here it means you cannot bring out to the surface of the conscious mind in its original form the incidence that occurred some years ago. It is an act of remembering.

If the experience is fresh you can have a complete recall of your past experience through memory. You cannot get any new knowledge through memory. You cannot get any new knowledge through memory. It is only a repetition.

In ordinary recollection there is a temporal coefficient. In personal memory there is a specific coefficient. That which acts together with another is a co-efficient. In mathematics the numerical or literal factor prefixed to an unknown quantity in an algebraic term is a co-efficient.

Suppose you have received a nice fan as a present from your friend. When you use the fan, it sometimes reminds you of your friend. You think of him for a short time. This fan serves as cause for memory (Udbodhaka or Smriti-hetu).

The following are the four good characteristics of good memory.

(I) If you read once a passage and if you can reproduce the same nicely it is a sign to indicate that you have a good memory. This is termed Sugamata.

(2) If you can reproduce the same thing without increase or decrease (addition or subtraction) it is called Araikalya.

(3) If you can preserve a fact or passage or anything for a very

considerable period it is called retentive memory Dharana.

(4) If you can reproduce a passage at once without any difficulty when it is needed, it is called Upadharana.

If your brother is coward, the sight of a similar man in another place will bring to your mind the memory of your brother. This is memory due to similarity of objects (Sadrishyata).

Suppose you have seen a dwarf at madras. When you see a very tall man or Patagonian this will remind you of the dwarf whom you saw at Madras. The sight of a big palace will remind you of a peasant's hut or a Sannyasin's grass Kutir on the banks of Ganges. This memory is due to dissimilarity in objects (Vipareetata).

When you walk along the road on a stormy day and happen to see a fallen tree you conclude that the tree has fallen owing to the storm. In this case the memory is due to the relation between cause and effect (Karya-Karana-Sambabdha).

Knowledge of the working of the sub-conscious mind is very necessary for those who want to develop their memory. Most of the mental operations take place in the sub-conscious mind. The conscious mind takes rest, but the sub-conscious mind works throughout the twenty-four hours. It is the sub-conscious mind that brings the answer like a flash of lightning in the early morning when you fail to get a solution any night, even though you rake your brain for hours and hours together. It is again the sub-conscious mind that wakes you up in the morning when you go to sleep with a firm resolve "I should catch the train at 3 A.M." it is a most faithful servant provided you know the technique of manipulating it in a masterly manner. You can extract tremendous work from it. All the prodigies or intellectual giants of the world know the act of handling and tapping this portion of the mind. The Chitta analyses, sorts, arranges facts and figures, takes out all old records from the various pigeon-holes of the mind and produces in the early morning or at the night time, a clear balance-sheet of facts for your perusal and review. Before you retire to bed, give orders to the Chitta to do any kind of work. It will keep the answer ready in the early morning. When you are in a dilemma, when you are at your wit's and confused, when you do not know how solve a serious problem, give orders to the Chitta –a definite command-placing before it the mature of your difficulty. In the morning at 4 A.M., you will have an unambiguous answer. Do this. Practice this. Then only you will have wonderful conviction and strength. You will find a very reliable friend in the sub-conscious mind.

A man of strong and retentive memory can turn out tremendous work in the twinkling of an eye. He can master any subject or art in a short time Dr. Samuel

Johnson used to repeat passages after passages in a few minutes by committing them to memory. His mother was quite astonished. She used to ask him: "Johnson my dear child, get this passage by heart." Before she would ascend the staircase, he would follow her and say, "Mamma, Mamma, I know this by heart." He would then repeat them then and there. Another can also achieve what one man has achieved. This is an immutable law of nature.

If you read the introduction of "Pranava Vada" written by Sri Bhagawan Das of Benares, you will find that he collected all the materials for his big book in three volumes by hearing the recitations from a pandit who was blind from his very birth and who knew the numbers of the pages also. You go to Bakshi Sur who lives in a village in Lakhimpur-Kheri in the United Provinces. He has a wonderful memory. He is a blind man from his birth. He can quote the page numbers too. How he learnt this, how he committed this to memory, is a wonder of wonders to day!

In olden days Sanskrit scholars got by heart all the Vedas. The General System of education has its own advantages. It develops memory to a very marvelous extent. Even now there is a Sanskrit Pandit in Benares who has committed to memory the whole of the Upanishads, Gita, Brahma Sutras, Khandan Khadyam, Chit Suhi and Adwaita Siddhi, the greatest monumental works on Vedanta. There are small boys in the Mahadarshan Vidyalaya of Sri Raghavachari in Rishikesh who have committed to memory the eighteen chapter of the Gita Gurukul system of education is wonderful. The students of modern universities cannot compete with the students of Gurukul system.

Brahmacharya, dietetic adjustment, discipline of Indriyas, are very essential for developing memory. The seminal energy has a direct intimate connection with the cells of the Chitta and the brain. You should try your extreme level best to preserve every drop of your vital fluid. Bad memory is due largely to heavy losses of this life giving energy. Young school and college student do not realize the vital importance of Brahmacharya. They grope in utter darkness. Their minds are filled with passion by daily looking at the nude pictures and embraces in the film shows. They indulge in novel reading they excite passion. They always seek bad company. They are conceited, arrogant and self-willed. They never care to approach the sages who can give them inspiring lessons of the science of the self, memory culture and conquest of passion. They eat whenever they like. They have no idea of Sattwic diet and the effect of unwholesome food of the different compartments of the brain. They have no knowledge of discipline of Indriyas and the science of dietetics. Hence they fail and fail miserably too in their lives and lead a cheerless, gloomy life in the darkness and despair. This is their only mistake. Those who are careful in Brahmacharya and food those who have Satsanga with Sadhus and Sanyasins are always quite safe.

They become quite successful in their lives. Even if they commit mistakes they are then and there corrected by wise men.

There are Udbodhakas or Smrithetus that bring things to memory. The sight of wristwatch brings the recollection of your friend who presented a wristwatch to you. The law of association is of immense help in developing your memory. The remembrance of a word that ends in 'ity' such as "cupidity," "avidity," etc., will bring to memory other words as "fantastic." In this way you can remember things. You will have to group things like this in the various pigeonholes of your brain. Connect one thing or event with another of a like nature. Then all these things will come back to your memory quite readily and willingly.

The Bhagavad-Gita on Self-realization

The forces of Nature do all works. But due to delusion of ignorance, it makes us to assume that we are the doer.

The one who knows the truth about the role of the forces of Nature in getting work done does not become attached to the work. Such a person knows that it is the forces of Nature that get their work done by using our organs as their instruments.

The Supreme Lord Krishna said: The individual soul (*Jiva, energy*) in the body of living beings is the integral part of the universal Spirit, or consciousness. The individual soul associates with the six sensory faculties perception and activates them. The inherent power of cognition and desire of Eternal Being (*Spirit*) is called the nature of Eternal Being. The creative power of Eternal Being (or Spirit) that causes manifestation of the living entity is called Karma.

A person whose mind is unperturbed by sorrow, who does not crave pleasures, and who is completely free from attachment, fear, and anger, is called an enlightened sage of steady intellect.

The one who sees the same eternal Supreme Lord dwelling as Spirit equally within all mortal beings truly sees Lord.

Those who are free from pride and delusion, who have conquered the evil of attachment, who are constantly dwelling in the Supreme Being with all lust completely stilled, who are free from dualities of pleasure and pain; such wise ones reach Lord's Supreme Abode.

Filled with insatiable desires, hypocrisy, pride, and arrogance; holding wrong views due to delusion; they act with impure motives.

The one who completely renounces the selfish attachment to the fruits of all works is considered a renunciant to supreme spirit. To attain this, one must learn to give up lust, anger, greed, and establish mastery over the six senses (hearing, touch, sight, taste, smell, and mind) by the purified intellect. One should always remember that all works are done by the energy of nature and that he or she is not the doer but only an instrument. One must strive for excellence in all undertakings but maintain equanimity in success and failure, gain and loss, and pain and pleasure.

The Bhagavad-Gita deals with the most sacred metaphysical science. It imparts the knowledge of the Self and answers two universal questions: Who am I, and how can I lead a happy and peaceful life in this world of dualities. Every human being faces dilemmas, big and small, in their everyday life when performing their duties. The main objective of the Bhagavad-Gita is to help people struggling in the darkness of ignorance and help them to reach the spiritual shore of liberation while living and working in the society.

Read the author's translation of the Bhagavad Gita, on the following link:

http://www.scribd.com/doc/29215444/Bhagavad-Gita-in-English-by-Philippe-L-De-Coster

The Western Ethics of Self-Realization

I. The theory of **self-realization** is that a life of excellence is based on the actualization of human potentialities. In psychology, this is called "self-development."

 A. Self-realization, here, is not meant to connote the active awareness of the Stoics, as the word might suggest (*i.e.*, "becoming aware").

 B. We ought to actualize our potentialities-the theory, then, rests to some degree on naturalism, the biological and psychological capacities of what it is to be a human being. The idea is that every great person in history has set up guidelines for his life.

 1. But obviously life is not long enough to actualize all our potential, or as the advertisements for the Army say, "Be all that you can be." The challenge is to live significantly and meaningfully in the here and now.

2. *E.g.*, you have the capacity to give everyone in your own location a yellow ribbon, but it is doubtful that this capacity is one which ought be developed.

3. The essential question to be answered by self-realization philosophy is "Which capacities should be developed?"

 Often it is said that "we must become intimately, passionately, subjectively aware of everything about our existence. One has to take the leap of faith that full living requires-to make yourself vulnerable to all that can happen." But can this really be done?

II. Essentially, there are three different views on which capacities should be developed.

 A. **Variety pattern** of self-realization: becoming a well-rounded person, learning and doing a little of everything.

 1. The ideal of a Liberal Arts education or of being a so-called Renaissance person.

 2. The assumption is that nothing is intrinsically boring to anyone: there are no boring subjects, only people who are boring because they have not developed the capacity to interest themselves in the fascinating variety of things.

 3. Problem: Life is too short to develop a mastery of many things.

 a. Dissatisfaction results later in life because one becomes "a jack of all trades and a master of none."

 b. Activities have an opportunity cost: to do one thing means that you will have to give up the opportunity of doing other things at that time. (The opportunity cost is that which is forgone by taking a particular action. *E.g.*, if you have only $5, by buying lunch, you cannot buy something else with that money.)

 B. **Dominant theme pattern:** concentrate on one major interest and build other interests around it.

 1. The idea here is to choose that which you have the most talent and interest and develop that to a high degree. Other activities are meant to enhance the primary interest.

2. Problems which could arise include:

 a. Many persons can do many things well, and they spent much of their lives trying to figure out what it is that they do best.

 Consider the people who do not know what major to choose in college. Many hang on, hoping that something will come along and seize their interest, almost as though they are waiting for a lightening bolt to strike them and change their life.

 They do not realize that there are many things they can do well, and they must impose their own value on activities, rather than waiting around for someone to convince them that this major is just for them.

 b. The dominant theme pattern is vulnerable to economics and the change of societal value. The theme that you choose might not earn you a living.

C. **Maximum fulfillment of desires**: (naturalism) people are born with innate purposes, ends, and goals, and excellence is achieved by fulfilling these natural human wants.

1. The desires are identified by looking specifically at what your peculiar desires are, from a biological and sociological view.

2. What do you want? One makes a list and then sets out to achieve it.

3. Problem: We are not always the best judge of what is good for us. (*Re*., the Socratic Paradox).

 a. Sometimes what we desire is actually harmful to us: Fairy tales in childhood often are structured around three wishes. The last wish is used to put things back the way they were.

 b. Sometimes people are much happier when they avoid fulfilling their natural desires which have harmful consequences. A disciplined life is often preferable to being a couch-potato.

III. What kind of capacities ought be desired? Certainly, only those which are cooperative.

A. **Cooperative capacities**: those which harmonize or enhance others.

1. *E.g.*, in general, friendship, health, knowledge, and courtesy.

2. Specifically, if one is interested in physics, one should develop math skills.

3. If one is interested in music, one should develop listening skills.

If one is interested in business, one should develop skills in marketing, accounting, and customer relations.

If one is learning karate, one should do stretching, weight training, and speed drill.

B. **Obstructive capacities**: traits or abilities which hinder or inhibit others.

1. *E.g.*, seeking to have fun all of the time, avoiding commitments, or shirking responsibilities often lead to ennui and boredom.

2. Piano playing and being a football player. Even being a lawyer and maintaining a high personal ethics often leads to conflict while defending a known criminal.

3. The belief in intellectual power alone and the ignoring of emotion, joy, fellowship, creates an imbalance in social attitudes which is detrimental to the individual's sense of significance.

IV. **Ideal of self-realization:** the maximally coherent system of mutually harmonious fulfilment-either of the Variety or Dominant Theme Pattern, depending upon one's personality and abilities.

A. Two assumed requirements: the activities are consistent with society and the activities do you no personal harm.

1. Carl Rogers definition of a full-functioning person: "any experience, emotional, perceptual, or rational, should be consistent and congruent with the person's concept of who he is."

2. In sum, self-actualization is a process of discovering important needs and goals, both personal and social, finding creative and enjoyable ways of meeting these goals-this is the way the individual attains significance.

3. Yet self-actualization cannot be achieved by just anyone. As Abraham Maslow pointed out, if certain needs are not previously met, self- actualization is not possible. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs:

1. aesthetic
2. cognitive
3. self-actualization
4. ego or esteem needs
5. love or belongingness
6. security or safety
7. physiological

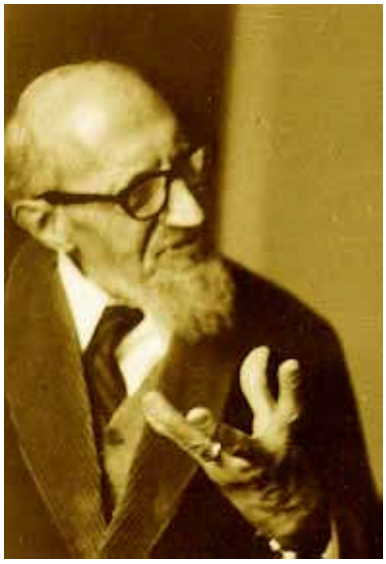
B. As we shall see in the objections to ethical egoism, these requirements can only be met when we extend the definitions of egoism to be a complete ethical theory.

Self-realization and Psychological Disturbances

by Dr. Roberto Assagioli, M.D.

In this paper Assagioli define the different psychological disturbances related to the various spiritual stages of development. In this way the psychotherapist can discriminates between the spiritual and the normal crisis.

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The study of the psychopathological aspects of human nature has contributed a vast mass of observations, theories and techniques for the diagnosis and treatment of psychiatric disorders. It has produced the widespread psychoanalytic movement and other aspects of dynamic psychology which have greatly enlarged and deepened our knowledge of the human psyche.

However, this pathological approach has, besides its assets, also a serious liability, and that is an exaggerated emphasis on the morbid manifestations and on the lower aspects of human nature and the consequent unwarranted generalized applications of the many findings of psychopathology to the psychology of normal human beings. This has produced a rather dreary and pessimistic picture of human nature and the tendency to consider its higher values and achievements as derived only from the lower drives, through processes of reaction formation, transformation and sublimation. Moreover, many important realities and functions have been neglected or ignored: intuition , creativity, the will, and the very core of the human psyche - the Self.

These limitations have been realized in recent times by a growing number of investigators who have started a healthy reaction. Attention has been called to the neglected factors both in normal men and women and in those more highly developed, aptly termed by Goldstein (1939) and Maslow (1954) “self-actualizing” individuals. The importance and value of the ethical element and of the religious tendencies in human nature have been emphasized by Allport (1955), Angyall (1941), Baruk (1945), Caruso (1959), Frankl (1955), Fromm (1950), Jung (1933), Maslow (1954), May (1953), Progoff (1959), Rank (1945), Sorokin (1954 a & b), Urban (1946), and others; this trend has recently been covered by the names of *ortho-psychology*, proposed by Maslow (1958), and orthogenesis, suggested by Ferrière (1959) in Switzerland. It is a current of research which appears to be headed in the right direction, and although still in

its initial stages promises to offer most valuable contributions to the knowledge of the whole human nature, and to the unfolding of its higher creative possibilities.

Yet, we think that also in this case some caution should be used, for all reactions have the tendency to go towards the other extreme, and one can already note evidence of such overcompensation in this field. Some representatives of the new current show a leaning towards reversion to the former conception of man as an already unified personality, which, unfortunately, is far from being the case. The drive towards integration has been rightly described and emphasized as a basic and normal urge of the human personality; but this is something quite different from the illusion of an already organically and harmoniously functioning personality.

A realistic observation of the flow of the psychological life in ourselves and in others shows clearly the existence of a number of differing and conflicting tendencies, which at times constitute the nuclei of semi- independent sub-personalities. Both psychoanalysis and the picture of human beings given by great novelists who were good intuitive psychologists point up these basic conflicts inherent in human nature.

The recognition that different drives and the various psychological functions are interrelated and interacting does not mean that they are integrated in a harmoniously functioning organism as are the biological functions in a healthy body. Even conflict constitutes a relation; and two armies fighting each other surely interact powerfully.

One kind of conflict which occurs frequently is that evidenced by ambivalence, and it explains many curious, contradictory manifestations of human beings. Another basic conflict is that between inertia, laziness, tendency to preservation, craving for security (which expresses itself in conformity) on the one hand, and the tendency towards growth, self-assertion and adventure on the other. Still another source of conflict is that of the awakening of new drives or needs which oppose pre-existing ones; this occurs on two chief occasions: first, the tumultuous awakening of new tendencies at the time of adolescence, and second, the awakening of religious

aspirations and new spiritual interests, particularly at middle age. It is this last type of conflict which is the primary concern of this paper.

It therefore appears that “organic unity” is a goal and not a present reality—a goal which can be visioned, approached, and up to a certain point achieved. It is in the most favorable cases the fruit of spontaneous growth and maturation; in others it is the well-earned reward of self-training, education or therapy, through

the use of a variety of techniques, in order to help and hasten the process. In the exposition which follows, we shall try to describe the various stages of self-realization, and to point out the difficulties and the emotional and mental disturbances which often—although not necessarily—occur during the process.

First of all, it is well to have a clear idea of what self-realization is. The term has been used to indicate two kinds of growth in awareness, of expansion of consciousness, which, although more or less related, are different in their nature and have quite different manifestations. The meaning most frequently given to self-realization is that of psychological growth and maturation, of the awakening and manifestation of latent potentialities of the human being-for instance, ethical, esthetic and religious experiences and activities. These correspond to the characteristics Maslow (1959) ascribes to self-actualization, and it would perhaps be well to use this term in order to distinguish it from the second kind of self-realization. This is the realization of the Self, the experience and awareness of the synthesizing spiritual Centre. It is not the realization of the personal conscious self or "I," which should be considered merely as the reflection of the spiritual Self, its projection, in the field of the personality.

Self-actualization may be achieved at different levels and does not necessarily include what can be called the spiritual level. On the other hand, an individual may have genuine spiritual experiences without being at all integrated, i.e., without having developed a well-organized, harmonious personality. This has been clearly shown by Jung (1956, p. 155) who calls our attention to the fact that the developing of the personality is not an absolute prerogative of the man of genius, and that he may have genius without either having personality or being a personality. Spiritual awakening and spiritual realization are something different from conscious awareness of the Self. They include various kinds of awareness of superconscious contents, either descending into the field of consciousness or found in the process of ascending to superconscious levels and thus having what Maslow (1959) calls a "peak experience." The distinction between the personal conscious self, the superconscious, and the spiritual Self is indicated in our discussion of the psychological constitution of man and in its accompanying diagram in the article *Dynamic Psychology and Psychosynthesis* (Assagioli, 1958).

We are using the word "spiritual" in its broader connotation which includes, therefore, not only the specific religious experience, but all the states of awareness, all the functions and activities which have as common denominator the possessing of values higher than the average, values such as the ethical, the aesthetic, the heroic, the humanitarian and the altruistic. We include under the general heading of "spiritual development" then, all experiences connected with awareness of the contents of the superconscious, which may or may not include

the experience of the Self. It should also be pointed out that the reaching up into the realm of the superconscious and its exploration, while approaching the consciousness of the Self, may sometimes even constitute an obstacle to full Self-realization, to the reaching of the summit where the personal-I awareness blends into awareness of the spiritual Self. One can become so fascinated by the wonders of the superconscious realm, so absorbed in it, so identified with some of its special aspects or manifestations as to lose or paralyze the urge to reach the summit of Self-realization.

In the following analysis of the vicissitudes and incidents which occur during the process of spiritual development, we shall consider both the successive stages of self-actualization and the achievement of full Self-realization. Maslow has well recognized that self-actualization should not be considered as a state in which all conflicts have been eliminated and full unity is achieved once and forever. His exposition of this important point is so lucid and cogent that it deserves to be quoted in full:

This paper is the first of a projected series, “Critique of Self-Actualization,” whose long-term aim is the further exploration of the full reach of human nature, but whose immediate, pedagogical aim is to correct the widespread misunderstanding of self-actualization as a static, unreal, “perfect” state in which all human problems are transcended, and in which people □live happily forever after” in a super-human state of serenity or ecstasy. To make this fact clearer, I could describe self-actualization as a development of personality which frees the person from the deficiency problems of growth and from the neurotic (or infantile, or fantasy, or unnecessary, or “unreal”) problems of life, so that he is able to face, endure and grapple with the “real” problems of life (the intrinsically and ultimately human problems, the unavoidable, the “existential” problems to which there is no perfect solution). That is, it is not an absence of problems but a moving from transitional or unreal problems to real problems. (Maslow, 1959, p. 24.)

Man’s spiritual development is a long and arduous journey, an adventure through strange lands full of surprises, difficulties and even dangers. It involves a drastic transmutation of the “normal” elements of the personality, an awakening of potentialities hitherto dormant, a raising of consciousness to new realms, and a functioning along a new inner dimension.

We should not be surprised, therefore, to find that so great a change, so fundamental a transformation, is marked by several critical stages, which are not infrequently accompanied by various nervous, emotional and mental troubles. These may present to the objective clinical observation of the therapist the same symptoms as those due to more usual causes, but they have in reality quite another significance and function, and need very different treatment.

The incidence of disturbances having a spiritual origin is rapidly increasing nowadays, in step with the growing number of people who, consciously or unconsciously, are groping their way towards a fuller life. Moreover, the heightened development and complexity of the personality of modern man and his more critical mind have rendered spiritual development a more difficult and complicated process. In the past a moral conversion, a simple whole-hearted devotion to a teacher or saviour, a loving surrender to God, were often sufficient to open the gates leading to a higher level of consciousness and a sense of inner union and fulfilment. Now, however, the more varied and conflicting aspects of modern man's personality are involved and need to be transmuted and harmonized with each other: his fundamental drives, his emotions and feelings, his creative imagination, his inquiring mind, his assertive will, and also his interpersonal and social relations.

For these reasons a general outline of the disturbances which can arise at the various stages of spiritual realization and some indications pertaining to their proper treatment will, we believe, serve a useful purpose. We might, for the sake of clarity, tabulate four critical stages:

1. Crises preceding the spiritual awakening.

2. Crises caused by the spiritual awakening.

3. Reactions to the spiritual awakening.

4. Phases of the process of transmutation.

We have used the symbolic expression "awakening" because it clearly suggests the perception, the becoming aware of a new area of experience, the opening of the hitherto closed eyes to an inner reality previously ignored.

1. Crises Preceding the Spiritual Awakening

In order to understand thoroughly the strange experiences that often precede the awakening, we must review some of the psychological characteristics of the "ordinary" human being.

One may say of him that he "lets himself live" rather than that he lives. He takes life as it comes and does not worry about the problems of its meaning, its worth or its purpose; he devotes himself to the satisfaction of his personal desires; he seeks enjoyment of the senses and endeavours to become rich and satisfy his ambitions. If he is more mature, he subordinates his personal satisfaction to the fulfillment of the various family and social duties assigned to him, without taking the trouble to understand on what bases those duties rest or from what

source they spring. Possibly he regards himself as “religious” and as a believer in God, but his religion is outward and conventional, and when he has conformed to the injunctions of his church and shared in its rites he feels that he has done all that is required of him. In short, he believes implicitly that the only reality is that of the physical world which he can see and touch and therefore he is strongly attached to earthly goods, to which he attributes a positive value; thus he practically considers this life an end in itself. His belief in a future “heaven,” if he conceives of one, is altogether theoretical and academic, as is proved by the fact that he takes the greatest pains to postpone as long as possible his departure for its joys.

But it may happen that this “ordinary man” becomes both surprised and disturbed by a change - sudden or slow - in his inner life.

This may take place after a series of disappointments; not infrequently after some emotional shock, such as the loss of a loved relative or a very dear friend. But sometimes it occurs without any apparent cause, and in the full enjoyment of health and prosperity. The change begins often with a sense of dissatisfaction, of “lack,” but not the lack of anything material and definite; it is something vague and elusive that he is unable to describe.

To this is added, by degrees, a sense of the unreality and emptiness of ordinary life; all personal affairs, which formerly absorbed so much of his attention and interest, seem to retreat, psychologically, into the background; they lose their importance and value. New problems arise. The individual begins to inquire into the origin and the purpose of life; to ask what is the reason for so many things he formerly took for granted; to question, for instance, the meaning of his own sufferings and those of others, and what justification there may be for so many inequalities in the destinies of men.

When a man has reached this point, he is apt to misunderstand and misinterpret his condition. Many who do not comprehend the significance of these new states of mind look upon them as abnormal fancies and vagaries. Alarmed at the possibility of mental unbalance, they strive to combat them in various ways, making frantic efforts to re-attach themselves to the “reality” of ordinary life that seems to be slipping from them. Often they throw themselves with increased ardor into a whirl of external activities, seeking ever new occupations, new stimuli and new sensations. By these and other means they may succeed for a time in alleviating their disturbed condition, but they are unable to get rid of it entirely. It continues to ferment in the depths of their being, undermining the foundations of their ordinary existence, whence it is liable to break forth again, perhaps after a long time, with renewed intensity. The state of uneasiness and agitation becomes more and more painful and the sense of inward emptiness more intolerable. The individual feels distracted; most of what constituted his

life now seems to him to have vanished like a dream, while no new light has yet come. Indeed, he is as yet ignorant of the existence of such a light, or else he cannot believe that it may ever illuminate him.

It frequently happens that this state of inner disturbance is followed by a moral crisis. His conscience awakens or becomes more sensitive; a new sense of responsibility appears and the individual is oppressed by a heavy sense of guilt and remorse. He judges himself with severity and becomes a prey to profound discouragement. At this point it is not unusual for him to entertain ideas of suicide. To the man himself it seems as if physical annihilation were the only logical conclusion to his inner breakdown and disintegration.

The foregoing description constitutes merely a general outline of such experiences. In reality individuals differ widely in their inner experiences and reactions. There are many who never reach this acute stage, while others arrive at it almost in one bound. Some are more harrassed by intellectual doubts and metaphysical problems; in others the emotional depression or the moral crisis is the most pronounced feature.

These various manifestations of the crisis bear a close relationship to some of the symptoms regarded as characteristic of psychoneuroses and borderline schizophrenic states. In some cases the stress and strain of the crisis also produce physical symptoms, such as nervous tension, insomnia and various other troubles (digestive, circulatory, glandular).

The differential diagnosis is generally not difficult. The symptoms observed isolatedly may be identical; but an accurate analysis of their genesis, and a consideration of the patient’s personality in its entirety and (most important of all) the recognition of his actual existential problem, reveal the difference in nature and level of the pathogenic conflicts. In ordinary cases, these occur between the “normal” drives, between these drives and the conscious ego, or between the ego and the outer world (particularly human beings closely related, such as parents, mate or children). In the cases which we are considering, the conflicts are produced by the new awakening tendencies, aspirations, and interests of a moral, religious, or spiritual character, as previously mentioned; and it is not difficult to ascertain their presence once their reality and validity are admitted rather than being explained away as mere phantasies, or as the internalizations of social taboos. In a general way they can be considered as the result of crises in the development, in the growth of the patient’s personality.

There is this possible complication: the presence in the same patient of symptoms deriving, in varying proportions, from both sources; but in these cases too, the differential criterion consists in discovering the different sources.

2. Crises Caused by the Spiritual Awakening

The opening of the channel between the conscious and the superconscious levels, between the ego and the Self, and the flood of light, joy and energy which follows, often produce a wonderful release. The preceding conflicts and sufferings, with the psychological and physical symptoms which they generated, vanish sometimes with amazing suddenness, thus confirming the fact that they were not due to any physical cause but were the direct outcome of the inner strife. In such cases the spiritual awakening amounts to a real cure.

But in some cases, not infrequent, the personality is inadequate in one or more respects and therefore unable to rightly assimilate the inflow of light and strength. This happens, for instance, when the intellect is not balanced, or the emotions and the imagination are uncontrolled; when the nervous system is too sensitive; or when the inrush of spiritual energy is overwhelming in its suddenness and intensity.

An incapacity of the mind to stand the illumination , or a tendency to egotism or conceit, may cause the experience to be wrongly interpreted, and there results, so to speak, a “confusion of levels.” The distinction between absolute and relative truths, between the Self and the “I,” is blurred and the inflowing spiritual energies may have the unfortunate effect of feeding and inflating the personal ego.

The author encountered a striking instance of such a harmful effect in the Psychiatric Hospital at Ancona. One of the inmates, a simple little man, formerly a photographer, quietly and persistently declared that he was God. Around this central idea he had constructed an assortment of fantastic delusions about heavenly hosts at his command; at the same time he was as peaceful, kind and obliging a person as one could imagine, always ready to be of service to the doctors and patients. He was so reliable and competent that he had been entrusted with the preparation of medicines and even the keys of the pharmacy. His only lapse in behaviour in this capacity was an occasional appropriation of sugar in order to give pleasure to some of the other inmates.

Doctors with materialistic views would be likely to regard this patient as simply affected by paranoid delusions; but this mere diagnostic label offers little or no help in understanding the true nature and causes of such disturbances. It seems worthwhile, therefore, to explore the possibility of a more profound interpretation of this man’s illusory conviction.

The inner experience of the spiritual Self, and its intimate association with and penetration of the personal self, gives to those who have it a sense of greatness and internal expansion, the conviction of participating in some way in the divine

nature. In the religious tradition and spiritual doctrines of every epoch one finds numerous attestations on this subject some of them expressed in daring terms. In the Bible there is the explicit sentence “I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.” St. Augustine declares: “When the soul loves something it becomes like unto it; if it should love terrestrial things it becomes terrestrial, but if it should love God (we may ask) does it not become God?”

The most extreme expression of the identity of the human spirit in its pure and real essence with the Supreme Spirit is contained in the central teaching of the Vedanta philosophy: “*Tat Twarn Asi*” (Thou art That) and “*Aham evam param Brahman*” (In truth I am the Supreme Brahman).

In whatever way one may conceive the relationship between the individual Self and the universal Self, be they regarded as identical or similar, distinct or united, it is most important to recognize clearly, and to retain ever present in theory and in practice, the difference that exists between the Self in its essential nature—that which has been called the “Fount,” the “Centre,” the “deeper Being,” the “Apex” of ourselves—and the small ordinary personality, the little “self” or ego, of which we are normally conscious. The disregard of this vital distinction leads to absurd and dangerous consequences.

The distinction gives the key to an understanding of the mental state of the patient referred to, and of other less extreme forms of self-exaltation and self-glorification. The fatal error of all who fall victim to these illusions is to attribute to their *personal* ego or “self” the qualities and powers of the Self. In philosophical terms, it is a case of confusion between an absolute and a relative truth, between the metaphysical and the empirical levels of reality; in religious terms, between God and the “soul.”

Our illustration represents an extreme case, but instances of such confusion, more or less pronounced, are not uncommon among people dazzled by contact with truths which are too powerful for their mental capacities to grasp and assimilate. The reader will doubtless be able to record instances of similar self-deception which are found in a number of fanatical followers of various cults.

Once the delusion has become established it is a waste of time to antagonize and to ridicule the patient’s aberration; it will merely arouse his opposition and resentment. The better way is to sympathize and, while admitting the ultimate truth of his belief, point out the nature of his error and help him learn how to make the necessary distinctions.

In other cases the sudden influx of energies produces an emotional upheaval which expresses itself in uncontrolled, unbalanced and disordered behaviour. Shouting and crying, singing and outbursts of various kinds characterize this

form of response. If the individual is active and aggressive he may be easily impelled by the excitement of the inner awakening to play the role of prophet or saviour; he may found a new sect and start a campaign of spectacular proselytism.

In some sensitive individuals there is an awakening of parapsychological perceptions. They have visions, which they believe to be of exalted beings; they may hear voices, or begin to write automatically, accepting the messages at their face value and obeying them unreservedly. The quality of such messages is very varied. Sometimes they contain fine teachings, but they should always be examined with much discrimination and sound judgment, and without being influenced by their uncommon origin or by any claim by their alleged transmitter. No validity should be attributed to messages containing definite orders and commanding blind obedience, and to those tending to exalt the personality of the recipient.

3. Reactions to the Spiritual Awakening

The reactions accompanying this phase are manifold and often occur a certain time after the awakening. As has been said, a harmonious inner awakening is characterized by a sense of joy and mental illumination that brings with it an insight into the meaning and purpose of life; it dispels many doubts, offers the solution of many problems and gives a sense of security. At the same time there wells up a realization that life is one, and an outpouring of love flows through the awakening individual towards his fellow beings and the whole of creation. The former personality, with its sharp angles and disagreeable traits, seems to have receded into the background and a new loving and lovable individual smiles at us and the whole world, full of eagerness to please, to serve and to share his newly acquired spiritual riches, the abundance of which seems almost too much for him to contain.

Such an exalted state lasts for varying periods, but it is bound to cease. The personal self was only temporarily overpowered but not permanently transformed. The inflow of light and love is rhythmical as is everything in the universe. After a while it diminishes or ceases and the flood is followed by the ebb.

Necessarily this is a very painful experience and is apt in some cases to produce strong reactions and cause serious troubles. The personal ego re-awakens and asserts itself with renewed force. All the rocks and rubbish, which had been covered and concealed at high tide, emerge again. The man, whose moral conscience has now become more refined and exacting, whose thirst for perfection has become more intense, judges with greater severity and condemns his personality with a new vehemence; he is apt to harbour the false belief of

having fallen lower than he was before. Sometimes it even happens that lower propensities and drives, hitherto lying dormant in the unconscious, are vitalized by the inrush of higher energy, or stirred into a fury of opposition by the consecration of the awakening man—a fact which constitutes a challenge and a menace to their uncontrolled expression.

At times the reaction becomes intensified to the extent of causing the individual even to deny the value and reality of his recent experience. Doubts and criticism enter his mind and he is tempted to regard the whole thing as an illusion, a fantasy or an emotional intoxication. He becomes bitter and sarcastic, ridicules himself and others, and even turns his back on his higher ideals and aspirations. Yet, try as he may, he cannot return to his old state; he has seen the vision, and its beauty and power to attract remain with him in spite of his efforts to suppress it. He cannot accept everyday life as before, or be satisfied with it. A "divine homesickness" haunts him and leaves him no peace. Sometimes the reaction presents a more pathological aspect and produces a state of depression and even despair, with suicidal impulses. This state bears a close resemblance to psychotic depression or "melancholia" which is characterized by an acute sense of unworthiness, a systematic self- depreciation and self-accusation; the impression of going through hell, which may become so vivid as to produce the delusion that one is irretrievably damned; a keen and painful sense of intellectual incompetence; a loss of will power and self-control, indecision and an incapacity and distaste for action. But in the case of those who have had an inner awakening or a measure of spiritual realization the troubles should not be considered as a mere pathological condition; they have specific psychological causes. One of these has been indicated by both Plato and St. John of the Cross with the same analogy.

Plato, in the famous allegory contained in the Seventh Book of his *Republic*, compares unenlightened men to prisoners in a dark cave or den, and says:

At first, when any of them is liberated and compelled suddenly to stand up and turn his neck around and walk towards the light, he will suffer sharp pains; the glare will distress him, and he will be unable to see the realities of which, in his former state, he had seen the shadows

St. John of the Cross uses words curiously similar in speaking of the condition called "the dark night of the soul":

The self is in the dark because it is blinded by a light greater than it can bear. The more clear the light, the more does it blind the eyes of the owl, and the stronger the sun's rays, the more it blinds the visual organs, overcoming them by reason of their weakness, depriving them of the power of seeing…As eyes weakened and clouded suffer pain when the clear light beats upon them, so the

soul, by reason of its impurity, suffers exceedingly when the Divine Light really shines upon it. And when the rays of this pure Light shine upon the soul in order to expel impurities, the soul perceives itself to be so unclean and miserable that it seems as if God has set Himself against it and itself were set against God. (Quoted by Underhill, 1913, p. 453.)

Before proceeding further it seems appropriate to point out that crises, less total and drastic, but in many ways similar to those taking place before and after the "awakening," occur in two main types of creative individuals— artists and scientists.

Artists have often complained of periods of aridity, frustration, inability to work. At such times they feel depressed and restless and may be affected by many of the psychological symptoms mentioned above (pp. 6-7). They are apt to make vain attempts at escape or evasion of that painful condition by means such as alcohol or drugs. But when they have reached the depth of despondency or desperation there may come a sudden flow of inspiration inaugurating a period of renewed and intense productive activity.

Often the work of art appears as a virtually finished product elaborated without conscious awareness at some unconscious level or region of the artist's inner being. As Murray (1959, p. 107) has stated in his brilliant essay on Vicissitudes of Creativity, speaking of the requirements of creation, "there must be sufficient permeability (flexibility) of boundaries, boundaries between categories as well as boundaries between different spheres of interest and—most important for certain classes of creation—sufficient permeability between conscious and unconscious processes…Too much permeability is insanity, too little is ultraconventional rationality."

The "frustrations" which harass the scientist at various stages of research and the role they play "in sending the energy inward to richer sources of inspiration" have been ably described by Progoff (1959, pp. 223-232).

The proper treatment in this type of crisis consists in conveying to the sufferer an understanding of its true nature and in explaining the only effective way of overcoming it. It should be made clear to him that the exalted state he has experienced could not, by its very nature, last forever and that reaction was inevitable. It is as though he had made a superb flight to the sunlit mountain top, realized its glory and the beauty of the panorama spread below, but had been brought back reluctantly to his starting point with the rueful recognition that the steep path leading to the heights must be climbed step by step. The recognition that this descent or "fall" is a natural happening affords emotional and mental relief and encourages the subject to undertake the arduous task confronting him on the path to Self-realization.

4. Phases of the Process of Transmutation

We now have to deal with the stage in which it has been recognized that the necessary conditions to be fulfilled and the price to be paid for the high achievement of Self-realization are a drastic transmutation and regeneration of the personality. It is a long and many-sided process which includes phases of active removal of the obstacles to the inflow and operation of superconscious energies; phases of development of the higher functions which have lain dormant or undeveloped; phases in which the ego must let the higher Self work, enduring the pressure and the inevitable pain of the process.

It is a most eventful period, full of changes, of alternations between light and darkness, between joy and suffering. The energies and the attention of the individual are often so engrossed in this task that his power of coping with the problems and activities of normal life may be impaired. Observed from the outside and gauged in terms of ordinary efficiency he seems to have deteriorated and to be less capable than before. He is not spared unfair judgment on the part of well-meaning but unenlightened friends or physicians, and he is often the target of pungent and sarcastic remarks about his “fine” spiritual ideals and aspirations making him weak and ineffective in practical life. This sort of criticism is felt as very painful, and its influence may arouse doubts and discouragement.

This trial constitutes one of the tests on the path of Self-realization; it teaches a lesson in overcoming personal sensitiveness, and is an occasion for the development of inner independence and self-reliance, without resentment. It should be accepted cheerfully, or at least serenely, and used as an opportunity for developing inner strength. If, on the other hand, the people in the individual’s environment are enlightened and understanding, they can help a great deal and spare him much unnecessary friction and suffering.

In reality this is a period of transition; a passing out of the old condition, without having yet firmly reached the new; an intermediate stage in which, as it has been aptly said, one is like a caterpillar undergoing the process of transformation into the winged butterfly. The insect must pass through the stage of the chrysalis, a condition of disintegration and helplessness. But the individual generally does not have the protection of a cocoon in which to undergo the process of transformation in seclusion and peace. He must—and this is particularly so nowadays—remain where he is in life and continue to perform his family, professional and social duties as well as he can, as though nothing had happened or was still going on. His problem is similar to that which confronts engineers in the reconstruction of a railway station without interrupting the traffic even for an hour. It is not surprising then that this difficult and complicated task, this “double life,” is likely to produce a variety of psychological troubles, such as

exhaustion, insomnia, emotional depression, aridity, mental agitation and restlessness. These in turn can easily produce all kinds of physical symptoms and disorders.

Sometimes the trouble is caused, or at least aggravated, by an excessive personal effort to hasten the higher realization by the forceful inhibition and repression of the sexual and aggressive drives—an attempt which only serves to produce an intensification of the conflict with resultant tension and neurotic symptoms. Such an attitude often is the outcome of moral and religious conceptions too rigid and dualistic—which engender condemnation of the natural drives, viewed as "bad" or "sinful." Then there are people who have abandoned *consciously* that attitude, but who are still unconsciously conditioned to some extent by it and manifest either ambivalence in this respect, or oscillation between the two extreme attitudes-that is, *suppression*, and the uncontrolled expression of all drives. The latter, while cathartic, is by no means an acceptable solution, from either the ethical standpoint or the medical, because it inevitably produces new conflicts -between the various basic drives, or between these drives and the restrictions imposed not only by the conventions of the social order, but also by the demands of interpersonal relations, and right social integration and adjustment.

The solution lies, rather, along the lines of a harmonious integration of all drives into the total personality, first through the proper subordination and coordination, and then through the transformation and sublimation of the excessive or unused quota of energy.

The achievement of this integration is not only not impeded but can be greatly facilitated by the activation of the superconscious functions, by the realization of the Self, because those larger and higher interests act as a magnet which draws up the "libido" or psychic energy invested in the "lower" drives. Moreover, when one of the specific functions of the Self, the will, is recognized and utilized, it too can contribute effectively, by means of its regulating and controlling power, to the harmonious integration, to the bio-psychosynthesis of the whole human being.

A different and, in a sense, opposite difficulty confronts the individual during the periods in which the flow of superconscious energies is easy and abundant. If not wisely controlled it may be scattered in feverish excitement and activity. Or, on the contrary, it may be kept too much in abeyance and unexpressed, so that it accumulates and its high pressure may injure the nervous system, just as too much electric current may burn out a fuse. The appropriate remedy is to use the inflowing energies constructively and harmoniously in the work of inner regeneration, in creative expression and in fruitful service, in such ways as the individual's capacities, conditions and opportunities may determine.

The subject of this article has made it necessary to stress the darker and more painful side of spiritual development, but it should not be inferred that those who are on the path of Self-realization are more likely to be affected by psychological disturbances than ordinary men and women. The stage of most intense suffering

often does not occur. The following points should, therefore, be made clear:

1. In many individuals such development is being accomplished in a much more gradual and harmonious way than that which has been described, so that the inner difficulties are overcome and the different stages passed through without causing severe reaction or producing definite symptoms.

2. The neurotic symptoms and the emotional disorders of the average man or woman are often more serious and intense, more difficult for them to bear and for doctors to cure, than those connected with Self-realization. They are mostly due to violent conflicts between the various aspects of the personality, or to unreasonable rebellion against circumstances and people. Some of these conflicts may be explicable in terms of Freud's (1953) interpretation (which is by no means valid for all), some in accordance with those of Adler (1931), Frankl (1955), Homey (1945), Jung (1953-1954), and others. It is often difficult to cure them satisfactorily because-the higher psychological levels and functions of these patients being not yet activated-there is little to which one can appeal to induce them to make the necessary sacrifices or submit to the discipline required in order to bring about the needed adjustments.

3. The nervous, emotional and mental problems arising on the way of Self-realization, however serious they may appear, are merely temporary reactions, by-products, so to speak, of an organic process of inner growth and regeneration. Therefore, they either disappear spontaneously when the crisis which has produced them is over, or they yield more easily to proper treatment.

4. The sufferings caused by periods of depression, by the ebbing of the inner life, are abundantly compensated for by periods of renewed inflow of superconscious energies and by the anticipation of the release and enhancement of the whole personality produced by Self-realization. This vision is a most powerful inspiration, an unfailing comfort and a constant source of strength and courage. One should therefore make a special point of recalling that vision as vividly and as frequently as possible, and one of the greatest services we can render to those struggling along the way is to help them to keep the vision of the goal ever present before the inner eye.

Thus one can anticipate, and have an increasing foretaste of, the state of consciousness of the Self-realized individual. It is a state of consciousness characterized by joy, serenity, inner security, a sense of calm power, clear understanding and radiant love. In its highest aspects it is the realization of essential Being, of communion and identification with the Universal Life.

Implications for Diagnosis and Treatment

Considering the question more strictly from the medical and psychological standpoint, we should realize that, while the troubles that accompany the various phases of Self-realization may be outwardly very similar to, and sometimes appear identical with, those which affect ordinary patients, their causes and significance are very different, and the treatment should correspondingly be different. In other words, the existential situation in the two groups not only is not the same, but it is, in a sense, opposite.

The psychological symptoms of ordinary patients have generally a regressive character. These patients have not been able to accomplish some of the necessary inner and outer adjustments that constitute the normal development of the personality. In many cases they have not succeeded in freeing themselves from emotional attachment to their parents, which persists into later life in the form of childish dependence on them or on other individuals who have become their substitutes. Sometimes an unwillingness to meet the requirements of ordinary family and social life, or an inability to cope with its difficulties, make them unconsciously seek refuge in illness or invalidism. In other cases the cause is an emotional shock or bereavement that they cannot or will not accept, which may lead to reactive depression or other neurotic symptoms. In all these cases we find, as a common characteristic, some conflict or conflicts, between various conscious and unconscious aspects of the personality, or between the personality and its environment.

The difficulties produced by the stress and strife in the various stages towards Self-realization have, on the contrary, a specifically progressive character. They are clue to the stirring of superconscious potentialities, to the strong “call from above,” to the pull of the Self, and are specifically determined by the ensuing maladjustment and conflicts with the “middle” and “lower” aspects of the personality. This crisis has been described in striking terms by Jung:

To be “normal” is a splendid ideal for the unsuccessful, for all those who have not yet found an adaptation. But for people who have far more ability than the average, for whom it was never hard to gain successes and to accomplish their share of the world’s work—for them restriction to the normal signifies the bed of Procrustes, unbearable boredom, infernal sterility and hopelessness. As a consequence there are many people who become neurotic because they are only

normal, as there are people who are neurotic because they cannot become normal. (Jung, 1933, P. 55.)

It is obvious that psychotherapeutic treatment appropriate to the two diverse kinds of patients must correspondingly be altogether different.

The therapeutic problem concerning the former group is that of helping the patient to reach the normal state of the average man or woman by means of the elimination of repressions and inhibitions, of fears and childish dependence; to find his way out of his self-centeredness, his emotionally distorted outlook, into an objective, sane and rational consideration of normal life, into a recognition of its duties and obligations and a right appreciation of other individuals. The contrasting, partly undeveloped, uncoordinated conscious and unconscious trends and functions have to be harmonized and integrated in a *personal psychosynthesis*.

The specific therapeutic task for the latter group, instead, is that of arriving at a harmonious adjustment by means of the proper assimilation of the inflowing superconscious energies and of their integration with the pre-existing aspects of the personality; that is, of accomplishing not only a personal but also a *spiritual psychosynthesis*.

From this it is apparent that the treatment suitable for the first group of patients proves not only unsatisfactory, but may be definitely harmful for those of the second group. The lot of the latter is doubly hard if they are being treated by a therapist who neither understands nor appreciates the superconscious functions, who ignores or denies the reality of the Self and the possibility of Self-realization. He may either ridicule the patient's uncertain higher aspirations as mere fancies, or interpret them in a materialistic way, and the patient may be persuaded that he is doing the right thing in trying to harden the shell of his personality, and close it against the insistent knocking of the superconscious Self. This, of course, can aggravate the condition, intensify the struggle and retard the right solution.

On the other hand, a therapist who is himself spiritually inclined, or has at least an understanding of and a sympathetic attitude towards the higher achievements and realities, can be of great help to the individual when, as is often the case, the latter is still in the first stage, that of dissatisfaction, restlessness and unconscious groping. If he has lost interest in life, if everyday existence holds no attractions for him and he has not yet had a glimpse of the higher reality, if he is looking for relief in wrong directions, wandering up and down blind alleys—then the revelation of the true cause of his trouble and the indication of the real unhoped-for solution, of the happy outcome of the crisis, can greatly help to

bring about the inner awakening which in itself constitutes the principal part of the cure.

The second stage, that of emotional excitement or elation—when the individual is carried away by an excessive enthusiasm and cherishes the illusion of having arrived at a permanent attainment—calls for a gentle warning that his blessed state is, of necessity, but temporary; and he should be given a description of the vicissitudes of the way ahead of him. This will prepare him for the onset of the inevitable reaction in the third stage, and

enable him to avoid much suffering because it is foreseen, as are subsequent doubts and discouragement. When a patient under treatment during this reaction has not had the benefit of a warning of this sort, the therapist can give much help by assuring him that his present condition is temporary and not in any sense permanent or hopeless as he seems compelled to believe. The therapist should insistently declare that the rewarding outcome of the crisis justifies the anguish—however intense he is experiencing. Much relief and encouragement can be afforded him by quoting examples of those who have been in a similar plight and have come out of it.

In the fourth stage of the "incidents of ascent," during the process of transmutation—which is the longest and most complicated—the work of the therapist is correspondingly more complex. Some important aspects of the treatment are:

1. To enlighten the patient as to what is really going on within him, and help him to find the right attitude to take.

2. To teach him how, by the right use of the will, to wisely control and firmly master the drives emerging from the unconscious, without repressing them through fear or condemnation.

3. To teach him the techniques of the transmutation and sublimation of sexual and aggressive energies. These techniques constitute the most apt and constructive solution of many psychological conflicts.

4. To help him in the proper recognition and assimilation of the energies inflowing from the Self and from superconscious levels.

5. To help him express and utilize those energies in altruistic love and service. This is particularly valuable also for counteracting the tendency to excessive introversion and self-centeredness that often exists in this and other stages of self-development.

6. To guide him through the various phases of the reconstruction of his personality around a higher inner centre, that is, in the achievement of his spiritual psychosynthesis.

At this point we should like to make it clear that the psychotherapeutic treatment we are describing does not by any means exclude an appropriate physical treatment, which can be combined with the former. But it is outside the scope of this article to deal with the physical means that can be used and which differ greatly according to the special requirements of each patient.

In some cases the treatment is complicated by the fact that there is an admixture of “regressive” and “progressive” symptoms. These are cases of irregular development. Such people may reach a high level with one part of their personality and yet be handicapped by certain infantile fixations or dominated by unconscious conflicts. One might say that a careful analysis shows that most of those who are engaged in the process of self-actualization are to be found with remnants of this kind; this is not surprising because the same can well be said also of so-called normal people who, as Maslow rightly states, live “in a state of mild and chronic psychopathology and fearfulness, of stunting and crippling and immaturity.” (1956, p. 1.)

From all that has been said it is apparent that, in order to deal in a satisfactory way with the psychological troubles incident to Self-actualization, a twofold competence is required -that of the professionally trained psychotherapist and that of the serious student of, or better still, the experienced traveller along the way to Self- realization. This twofold endowment is at present only rarely found; but, considering the growing number of individuals who require such treatment, it is becoming increasingly urgent that as many as possible of those who wish to serve humanity by administering to its greatest needs should be induced to qualify for the task.

It would also be of great benefit if the public were better informed about the general facts of the subject. At present, it frequently happens that ignorance, prejudice and active opposition—particularly on the part of the patient’s relatives—hamper the task of patient and therapist. With a more enlightened approach by both the public and by psychotherapists, much unnecessary suffering can be avoided. Thus many earnest men and women will more easily and speedily reach the goal of their endeavour— the attainment of an ever increasing Self-realization.

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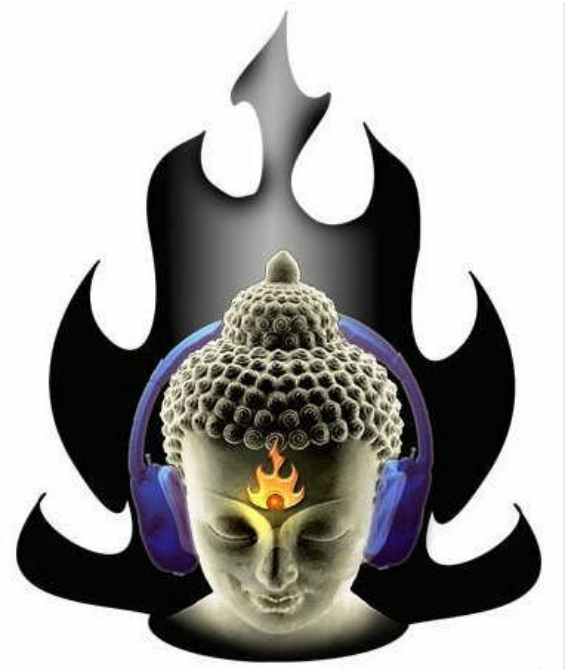
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The Third Eye

by John N. Bleibtreu

(*This article is **informational only** and not intended for profit.*)



“The third eye is an energy centre constructed by man; it is a correspondence to the energy centre, the causal body, constructed by the Monad.” “Through the practice of the power of visualisation, the third eye is developed.”

“The third or spiritual eye has several functions. Amongst others, it is the organ for illumination, the unveiled eye of the soul, through which light and illumination comes into the mind, and thus the entire lower life becomes irradiated. It is also the organ through which pours the directing energy which streams out from the conscious creating adept to the instruments of service, his thought-forms. The little evolved do not, of course, employ the third eye for the stimulating of their thought-forms.”

“When the third eye is used, which is the case in contemplation, it is the synthesiser and director of triple energy; hence the powerful work performed by those in whom it is functioning. The third eye only begins to function when the third circle of egoic petals is beginning slowly to unfold.”

“One of the fundamental rules back of all magical processes is that no man is a magician or worker in white magic until the third eye is opened, or in process of opening, for it is by means of that eye that the thought-form is energised,

directed and controlled and the lesser builders or forces are swept into any particular line of activity."

"The 'Eye of Shiva' in the human being has its position . . .in the centre of the forehead between the two physical eyes. It is not to be confounded with the pineal gland, which is distinctly a physical centre or gland. The third eye exists in etheric matter, and is an etheric centre of force, . . . whereas the pineal gland is formed of matter of the three lower sub-planes of the physical plane. The latter, nevertheless, has to be functioning more or less before the 'Eye of Shiva' becomes in any degree active."

"The third eye is the director of energy or force, and thus an instrument of the will of Spirit. . . . It is the eye of the inner vision, and he who has opened it can direct and control the energy of matter, see all things in the Eternal Now, and therefore be in touch with causes more than with effects, read the akashic records, and see clairvoyantly. . . . It is through the medium of this 'all-seeing eye' that the Adepts can at any moment put Himself in touch with his disciples anywhere."

"The third eye links the awakened physical plane man with the astral or subjective world, and enables him to function consciously there. . . . The third eye is the window of the Ego or soul functioning on the physical plane whereby he looks inward into the three worlds."

From A Treatise on Cosmic Fire:

More Third Eye

> The third eye is the centre of psychic powers and higher intuition, you can receive guidance, channelling, and tune into your higher self. This is the centre that enables you to experience telepathy, astral travel and past lives.

The symbol of the All-Seeing-EYE has always been part of Earth's creation mythologies and mysteries.

In Ancient Egypt is was symbolized by the Eye of Horus.

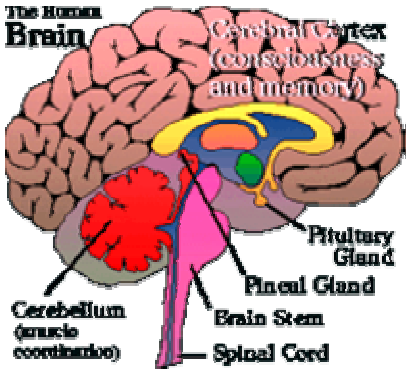
The symbol was passed down through the ancient mystery teachings and and can be found on the American dollar bill.

Why the symbol of the EYE?

The eye is the observer of reality - or the illusion of reality.

In the physical body your eyes look outward - though it views objects upside down. It next sends the message of what it observes to the brain, which interprets the image and makes it appear right side-up to us.

But the human body has another physical eye whose function has long been recognized by humanity.



It is called the ‘Third Eye’ which in reality is the Pineal Gland. It is the Spiritual Third Eye, our Inner Vision, and it is considered the Seat of the Soul. It is located in the geometric centre of the cranium.

The pineal gland is cone-shaped.

The Pineal Gland is about the size of a pea, and is in the centre of the brain in a tiny cave behind and above the pituitary gland which lies a little behind the root of the nose. It is located directly behind the eyes, attached to the third ventricle.

The true function of this mysterious gland, has long been contemplated by philosophers and Spiritual Adepts. Ancient Greeks believed the pineal gland to be our connection to the Realms of Thought. Descartes called it the Seat of the Soul.

This gland is activated by Light, and it controls the various biorhythms of the body. It works in harmony with the hypothalamus gland which directs the body’s thirst, hunger, sexual desire and the biological clock that determines our aging process.

When the pineal gland awakens one feels a pressure at the base of the brain. This pressure will often be experienced when connecting to higher frequency. A head injury can also activate the Third Eye - Pineal Gland.

While the physiological function of the pineal gland has been unknown until recent times, mystical traditions and esoteric schools have long known this area in the middle of the brain to be the connecting link between the physical and spiritual worlds.

Considered the most powerful and highest source of ethereal energy available to humans, the pineal gland has always been important in initiating supernatural

powers. Development of psychic talents has been closely associated with this organ of higher vision.

The third eye can see beyond the physical….



The pineal gland contains a complete map of the visual field of the eyes, and it plays several significant roles in human functioning. There is a pathway from the retinas to the hypothalamus called the retinohypothalamic tract. It brings information about light and dark cycles to a region of the hypothalamus called the suprachiasmatic nucleus (SCN).

From the SCN, nerve impulses travel via the pineal nerve (sympathetic nervous system) to the pineal gland. These impulses inhibit the production of melatonin. When these impulses stop (at night, when light no longer stimulates the hypothalamus), pineal inhibition ceases and melatonin is released. The pineal gland is therefore a photosensitive organ and an important timekeeper for the human body.

Retinal research done with hamsters demonstrates another centre for melatonin production. Located in the retina, this centre implies that the eyes have their own built in circadian timepiece. This retinal system is distinct from the brain's body clock in the suprachiasmatic nucleus (SCN). Biologists found that they could throw the retinal rhythms out of sync with other circadian cycles. They also found that they could set and reset the retinal clock even when the SCN was destroyed.

The retinal clock produces (stimulates the production of?) melatonin. Researchers are now looking for the exact location (s) of this clock in the human eye (and expect to find it). No one yet knows what the separate clock is for or how it relates to the SCN.

In some lower vertebrates the Epiphysis Cerebri - Pineal Gland - has a well-developed eye-like structure; in others though not organized as an eye, it functions as a light receptor. In lower vertebrates, the pineal gland has an eye like structure and it functions as a light receptor and is considered by some to be the evolutionary forerunner of the modern eye.

The gland weighs little more than 0.1 gram. The gland is large in children and begins to shrink with the onset of puberty.

The pineal gland is large in children, but shrinks at puberty. It appears to play a major role in sexual development, hibernation in animals, metabolism, and

seasonal breeding. In humans it affects circadian rhythms, sleep patterns (melatonin levels increase at night), and is implicated in seasonal affective disorder. The abundant melatonin level in children, is believed to inhibit sexual development. When puberty arrives, melatonin production is reduced.

The pineal gland secretes melatonin during times of relaxation and visualization. As we are created by electromagnetic energy - and react to EM energy stimuli around us - so does the pineal gland.

When activated, the pineal gland becomes the line of communication with the higher planes. The crown chakra reaches down until its vortex touches the pineal gland. Prana, or pure energy, is received through this energy centre in the head. With Practice the vibration level of the astral body is raised, allowing it to separate from the physical.

To activate the 'third eye' and perceive higher dimensions, the pineal gland and the pituitary body must vibrate in unison, which is achieved through meditation and/or relaxation. When a correct relationship is established between personality, operating through the pituitary body, and the soul, operating through the pineal gland, a magnetic field is created.

The negative and positive forces interact and become strong enough to create the 'light in the head.' With this 'light in the head' activated, astral projectors can withdraw themselves from the body, carrying the light with them.

Astral travel, and other occult abilities, are closely associated with the development of the 'light in the head'. After physical relaxation, concentration upon the pineal gland is achieved by staring at a point in the middle of the forehead. Without straining the muscles of the eye, this will activate the pineal gland and the 'third eye'.

Beginning with the withdrawal of the senses and the physical consciousness, the consciousness is centred in the region of the pineal gland. The perceptive faculty and the point of realization are centralized in the area between the middle of the forehead and the pineal gland. The trick is to visualize, very intently, the subtle body escaping through the trap door of the brain.

A popping sound may occur at the time separation of the astral body in the area of the pineal gland.

Visualization exercises are the first step in directing the energies in our inner systems to activate the 'third eye'. The magnetic field is created around the pineal gland, by focusing the mind on the midway point between the pineal

gland and the pituitary body. The creative imagination visualizes something, and the thought energy of the mind gives life and direction to this form.

'Third eye' development, imagination, and visualization are important ingredients in many methods to separate from the physical form. Intuition is also achieved through 'third eye' development. Knowledge and memory of the astral plane are not registered in full waking consciousness until the intuition becomes strong enough. Flashes of intuition come with increasing consistency as the 'third eye' as activated to a greater degree, through practice. Universal knowledge can also be acquired.

The pineal gland corresponds with divine thought after being touched by the vibrating light of Kundalini. Kundalini starts its ascent towards the head center after responding to the vibrations from the 'light in the head.' The light is located at the top of the sutratma, or 'soul thread', which passes down from the highest plane of our being into the physical vehicle.

The 'third eye,' or 'eye of Siva,' the organ of spiritual vision, is intimately related to karma, as we become more spiritual in the natural course of evolution.

As human beings continue to evolve further out of matter, on the journey from spirit to matter back to spirit, the pineal gland will continue to rise from its state of age-long dormancy, bringing back to humanity astral capacities and spiritual abilities.

At certain brain wave frequencies, a sense of ego boundary vanishes. In the "theta" state, we are resting deeply and still conscious, at the threshold of drifting away from or back into conscious awareness. As the brain enters deeper states, our consciousness is less concerned with the physical state, our 'third eye' is active, and separation becomes natural.

Many native traditions and mystical practices refer to the ability of 'seeing,' or being aware of energy fields at higher levels. This abstract awareness is much more subjective and does not involve the normal level of mundane consciousness, which is mostly concerned with self-identity. This 'seeing' refers to the sight of the 'third eye'.

Consciousness is raised from an emotional nature into an illumined awareness when the pineal gland is lifted from dormancy. If the pineal gland is not yet fully developed, it will be in the course of evolution. When our sense of ego and personality are set aside and we keep our mental energy intact, we can become conscious of the non-physical, our inner self, the subconscious, through different practices to activate the 'light in the head.'

The Third Eye and LSD

The belief that in madness there may exist a core of numinous knowledge is a commonplace in all human societies. In the Western tradition, the doctrine that truth may be obtained through a state of mind, in which reason is dislocated, a state of ecstatic revelation, is generally supposed to have originated with the Thracian worship of Dionysius, later becoming synthesized by Pythagorus, and to have received its most complete elaboration in the dialogues of Plato.

The class of drugs of which LSD-25 is the most potent member may prove for our time to be a very useful tool in exploring, via the scientific method, the roots of this age-old dilemma concerning the nature of perceived reality. That madmen may often be capable of incredible accomplishment should be obvious to everyone living in this century, whose history has been so monstrously deformed by the activities of an undeniable madman, Adolf Hitler.

These disputations most frequently arise in connection with accomplishment in the creative arts, where the biographies of many greatly talented people are replete with histories of bizarre behaviour of one kind or another.

It is impossible, however, to make such correlation on any kind of statistical basis, since for every “mad artist” on the model of Van Gogh, one can point to two equally creative, original, and productive artists on the sane and sober models of J. S. Bach or T. S. Eliot.

In addition to the artificially induced LSD state, there are other, naturally occurring temporary states in which there is a collapse of the normal routines by which the mind ordinarily processes the information it receives of the outside world.

Not only Hitler but before him Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, and Napoleon Bonaparte all reportedly suffered from mysterious seizures which overtook them at seemingly random times–often inconveniently. Dostoevsky also suffered from these states, and his reports of them are sufficiently detailed to permit a more certain medical diagnosis of his affliction–some kind of psycho-motor epilepsy.

As he describes the “aura” which precedes his seizures, the language is remarkably similar to that used by LSD subjects. Dostoevsky wrote: “For a few moments I experience such happiness as is impossible under ordinary circumstances and of which other people can have no notion. I feel complete harmony in myself and in the world and this feeling is so strong and sweet that for several seconds of such bliss, one would give ten years of one’s life; indeed, perhaps one’s whole life.”

Others have reported on these aura states as well. Along with the feelings of peace and euphoria, there is a general impression of a clear and golden shimmering light. Quite often there is a sense of cerebral clarity as well, and solutions of a lovely simplicity appear for the most intractably knotted problems.

None of the names used to describe the class of drugs to which LSD belongs and which produce these peculiar states of altered consciousness is completely satisfactory. When they were first developed, they were called psychotomimetic (imitative of psychosis), but this term rang unhappily in the ears of many who felt that the word implied pathology and thus made a negative value judgment.

Another name for them, hallucinogenic, was unfortunate in that it rendered an epistemological judgment–hallucinations being by definition unreal or untrue–and if one is to maintain a proper stance of scientific objectivity, one must suspend judgment regarding the reality of reality. For it is just possible that in some way these drugs augment our sense receptors or in some way so alter the mechanism of their functioning that another dimension of reality is made manifest.

This last notion is the one implied in the term psychedelic (mind manifesting), which seems gradually to be coming into general use to describe both the class of drugs and those states of mind with which they are associated.

THERE is a vast literature running back for thousands of years which describes psychedelic experiences, long before 1938, when Albert Hofmann first synthesized d-lysergic acid diethylamide. Some of the literature describes attacks, sudden, spontaneous, and totally unexpected, like that attack which overcame St. Paul on the road to Damascus.

Other traditions in the literature describe states that were induced by fasting, by the sensory deprivation resulting from disciplined meditation (the wilful exclusion of sensory input), by hysteria through frenzied dancing or orgiastic sexuality, by hypnosis, or by the use of various natural psychedelic intoxicants.

Reports of these kinds of exalted states have come to us not only through the literature of religious fanaticism; such accomplished scientists as Pascal and Newton have written of being overcome by mystic trances to which they attribute many of their creative insights. William James well understood that the mystic was often able to effect an almost miraculous synthesis between this world of “imagined” reality and the world of phenomena.

In recent years, psychology has tended, to its discredit, to ignore these elements of William James’s thought. One of the happy by-products of LSD has been the revival of interest in William James on the part of academic psychologists who

had previously thought that these concerns of his were a cranky eccentricity in the body of his worthwhile work.

Two famous reports of modern times of this kind of correlation–between the hard factual world of science and the dream world of the psychedelic state–are those of Friedrich Kekule, the German chemist who has written that he was "presented with" the closed-chain theory of the structure of the benzene molecule, during one such dream-trance state, and Otto Loewi, who wrote that in 1921 he awakened from a dream in which was described to him the means by which chemical transfer was accomplished, between nerve and effecter cells. Loewi rushed down to his laboratory, where he proceeded to prove the reality of the dream–an accomplishment which led to the Nobel Prize.

From the time of Dionysius, to the time of Plato, the cultures of the Mediterranean consented to this doctrine that claimed the existence of an order of ultimate reality which lies beyond apparent reality, and that this "paranormal" reality is accessible to the consciousness only when the "normal" routines of mental data processing are dislocated.

It was Plato's pupil Aristotle who spoiled his master's game. Following upon Aristotle, Western philosophy became bifurcated. The philosophical temper of our civilization, being scientifically and technically oriented, is basically Aristotelian.

No such rational figure as Aristotle arose in the Orient to a position of equal eminence. Regardless of the reasons, Indian anatomists and zoologists, who were no doubt just as curious as the Greeks about the origins of life, and as skilled in dissection, did not feel compelled to set their disciplines up in opposition to metaphysics. Metaphysical philosophy and natural philosophy remained joined like Siamese twins. As a result, that discipline which became medicine in the West evolved into a system known as Kundilini Yoga in the Hindu culture. This was a system designed to produce in those who followed its teachings a condition of controlled "creative" madness.

The system made a heroic attempt to join together the seeming disparate entities of body and mind. It is a very complicated doctrine; in oversimplified terms, the system encourages the practitioner to progress through the control of six stages, called chakras, of body-mind coordination. The sixth, the highest and most exalted state, is called the sahasrara.

The physiological site of this sixth chakra, the sahasrara, is located in the centre of the forehead; it is symbolized by an eye–the so-called third eye, the inner eye, or the eye of the mind. When this eye is opened, a new and completely other dimension of reality is revealed to the practitioner of yoga. Western scholars

when they first came upon this literature took the third eye to be an appropriately poetic metaphor and nothing else.

But in the middle of the nineteenth century, as the subcontinent of Australia and its surrounding territory came to be explored, a flurry of zoological interest centered upon a lizard native to the area, the tuatara (Sphenodon punctatum).

This animal possessed, in addition to two perfectly ordinary eyes located on either side of its head, a third eye buried in the skull which was revealed through an aperture in the bone, covered by a transparent membrane, and surrounded by a rosette of scales. It was unmistakably a third eye, but upon dissection it proved to be non-functional.

Though it still possessed the structure of a lens and retina, these were no longer in good working order; also lacking were appropriate neural connections to the brain. But the presence of this eye in the tuatara still poses a puzzle to present-day evolutionists, for almost all vertebrates possess a homologous structure in the center of their skulls.

It is present in many fish, all reptiles, birds, and mammals (including humans). No functional role whatever could be imagined for this structure in humans, and it remained merely an anatomical curiosity until 1898, when Otto Heubner, a German physician, wrote a paper associating cancers of this organ with instances of precocious puberty in children. Heubner's observation was confirmed many times over in the intervening years and gave rise to a number of theories concerning the role of the pineal organ as a regulator of sexual maturity. Those who adhered to these theories considered the pineal to be a gland, but since no secretions could be isolated or identified as emanating from this organ, the theories remained unsubstantiated by clinical evidence.

IN 1948 no one was paying any attention to the pineal organ. A hematologist, Maurice Rapport, working in the Cleveland Clinic was engaged in the search for that substance in blood serum which could be related to the tendency of blood to clot, and which might also cause the constriction of blood vessels. He eventually found just such a substance; it tended to make blood form clots, and it tended to be a muscle- as well as a vaso-constrictor. Rapport named this substance serotonin; it is manufactured quite profusely by specialized cells lining the wall of the gut, and it is presumed to play a role of some kind in the peristaltic movements.

Directly as Rapport announced his discovery, the new chemical came under intensive scrutiny; biochemists were eager to find means of augmenting its role as a clotting agent and vasoconstrictor; they were also eager to find means of blocking these functions. It was E. J. Gaddum, a professor of pharmacology at

the University of Edinburgh, who seems to have been one of the first to note a connection between serotonin and mental states of being.

In a paper published in 1953, he pointed out the odd fact that LSD-25 was a potent antagonist to serotonin. Two biochemists working at the Rockefeller Institute, D. W. Woolley and E. Shaw, were similarly struck by this odd coincidence. They tested a number of other chemicals antagonistic to serotonin and wrote in a rather startled tone "Among each of these compounds are some that cause mental aberrations….

If this be true, then the naturally occurring mental disorders–for example schizophrenia–which are mimicked by these drugs may be pictured as being the result of a cortical serotonin deficiency arising from metabolic failure rather than from drug action.

This announcement produced a thrill of excited hope, which was short-lived; there were other antagonists to serotonin just as potent as LSD which had no effect whatever on mental states.

Serotonin also refused to pass through the so-called "blood-brain barrier." If it was injected into the bloodstream of an animal (or a human), it did not seem to pass into the brain. But the medical profession accommodated itself easily to this particular disappointment; for this discovery and a series of others, which occurred during the same period gave rise to a whole new set of concepts concerning the roles of various chemical compounds manufactured within the brain.

Many of them were molecules of a type known as amines. They were not, strictly speaking, hormones, since they were not produced and secreted by glandular tissue, but by scattered specialized cells, including nerve cells. They came to be called, in a quaint reversion to eighteenth-century diction, neuro-humours.

According to Webster, a humour is a fluid or juice of an animal or plant specifically one of the four fluids–blood, phlegm, choler, and melancholy–conceived as entering into the constitution of the body and determining, by their relative proportions, a person's health and temperament; hence one's disposition, or state of mind, whether constitutional, habitual, or temporary.

The discovery of the chemical nature of these humours led to the development of chemicals antagonistic to them and thus to entire families of humour-regulating drugs–the tranquilizers, anti-depressants, nervous-system stimulants, and so on.

But despite this new knowledge, the mystery of the LSD-serotonin antagonism persisted. Serotonin is not an unusual chemical in nature; it is found in many places–some of them odd, like the salivary glands of octopuses; others ordinary: it abounds in plants; bananas, figs, plums are especially rich in it.

What was it doing in the brains of humans? What was its evolutionary history?

In 1958 a Yale Medical School professor of dermatology named Aaron B. Lerner published a paper on the pineal gland which placed this elusive substance in some vague kind of historical perspective and provided for it a real functional role in the brains of mammals.

IT had been known since 1917 that if crushed pineal glands were introduced into water in which tadpoles were swimming, the skin colour of the tadpoles would turn light.

The chemical substance melanin is the pigment which darkens skin colour. It is located in specialized cells scattered through the topmost layer of skin.

Pineal extract caused these cells to contract in tadpole skin and in certain other reptiles which change their skin colour in response either to mood or environmental setting.

Lerner was interested in melanomas, cancers of the pigment cells of human skin; he was curious to find out if there was any possible connection between this skin-lightening substance found in pineals and cancer. After an incredible four-year project, during which time he dissected over 250,000 cattle pineal glands supplied to him by the Armour Company, he finally isolated the substance responsible, calling it melatonin, since it caused the contraction of melanin-producing cells.

He proved that melatonin was a hormone, that it was produced specifically by the pineal organ, and that therefore this organ was a true, functioning gland, not merely a vestigial sight organ, a relic from our reptilian past. He discovered, moreover, how melatonin was manufactured by the pineal–by the action of certain enzymes on a precursor chemical which must pre-exist in the pineal in order for it to be transformed into melatonin. This precursor chemical turned out to be serotonin.

But try as he would, Lerner could find no connection between melatonin and the pigment cells of mammalian skin. In fact, he could find no use whatever for melatonin in the body economy of mammals.

The task of exploring the role played by melatonin in the bodies of mammals was undertaken by a brilliant biochemist, Julius Axelrod, working at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, in the company of several young associates, notably Richard Wurtman and Solomon Snyder. They discovered the basic biochemical sequences performed by the pineal in the manufacture of melatonin; they found that it was produced from serotonin by the action of two enzymes, an acetylating enzyme and a methoxylating enzyme.

By blocking or augmenting the action of these enzymes, Axelrod and his assistants were able, most ingeniously, to stimulate or suppress the organism's own manufacture of melatonin. In the course of this work, it became apparent that Otto Heubner's old contention that the pineal produced a substance which interfered with sexual development was very close to the truth.

Melatonin did, in fact, suppress physiological sexuality in mammals. If test animals were stimulated to manufacture excessive amounts of melatonin, their gonads and ovaries tended to become reduced in size, to shrink, to atrophy. The estrous, or fertility, cycle in females could likewise be altered experimentally by doses of melatonin.

Now, two most curious functions had been attributed to the pineal gland, the third eye, the eye of the mind.

It had now been established that this organ produced a chemical which had, indirectly at least, been associated with psychedelic states. It also produced a chemical which suppressed functional sexuality.

The literature of religious mysticism in all ages and all societies has viewed the mystical passion of ecstasy as being somehow analogous to, or involved with, carnal passion.

In the pineal gland, in the eye of the mind, were discovered a hormone and a neurohumour which were functionally associated with both kinds of passion.

Axelrod and his co-workers also discovered another incredible fact. The pineal gland produces its chemicals according to a regular oscillating beat, the basis of this beat being the so-called circadian rhythm. This pulse remains constant if darkness and light follow one another through the course of the day in a regular alternation. They found that the pineal responded somehow to light conditions, that by altering light conditions they could extend, contract, even stabilize the chemical production rhythms of the pineal.

How does the pineal perceive light, directly, by being a light sensor itself, still performing some of the functions of an eye; or indirectly, via the central nervous

system? The evidence is still not conclusive. Light does penetrate bone and brain to reach the pineal in significant amounts.

This was proved by a University of California zoologist, W. F. Ganong, who implanted photocells adjacent to the site of the pineal in sheep and got altered readings from his instruments depending on whether the animals were standing in direct sunlight or in shade.

On the other hand, if animals are blinded, or have the nerves connecting the eye to the brain severed, some of the pineal rhythms are dampened, just as though the animals were being maintained in continual darkness.

But there is still a sufficient number of discrepancies in the evidence to leave the question of direct light sensing by the pineal open for the moment. Axelrod and Wurtman believe that there are other, undiscovered chemicals being manufactured by the pineal, for they see signs of enzyme activity which cannot be accounted for by either serotonin or melatonin.

The fact that the pineal responds to light, even if this response is indirect via the central nervous system, has some fascinating and far-reaching conceptual applications.

There are many behavioural changes which overtake animals as the seasons change, and which can be produced out of season in the laboratory by simulating the appropriate span of artificial daylight.

Do such seasonal changes in mood and behaviour persist in humans?

The great religious holy days of all faiths tend to cluster around the times of the solstices and equinoxes. Is it possible that the human pineal gland responds to these alterations in the length of daylight, and by changing the balance of neuro-humours in the brain, perhaps effects a greater incidence of psychedelic states in certain susceptible individuals just at these crucial times? This possibility provides an entirely new potential dimension to our secular understanding of the religious experience.

Since Lerner had done his original pineal research at Yale, his colleagues belonging to various disciplines had become fascinated with his work even before it was published. As a result, Yale had a kind of head start in pineal research. Among the first to pursue the trail of pineal hormones and neuro-humours was Nicholas Giarmin, a professor of pharmacology who had been a former student of Gaddum’s at Edinburgh and remembered the connection Gaddum had made five years previous between LSD and serotonin.

With him worked a professor of psychiatry, Daniel Freedman, who had become fascinated by the whole new field of pharmacology and states of mind. They began by measuring the serotonin contents of the various parts of the human brain at autopsy. In order to make these measurements, one must exploit the very limits of our technological capacities. Neuro-humours exist in the brain in infinitesimally small amounts.

They are measured by a unit known as the nanogram, which is one billionth of a gram. Not only are assay procedures highly critical, but since drastic chemical changes occur between that state which we call life, and that which we define as death, it is difficult to prove that the amounts of any given entity found on autopsy are the same as those which might be found in the same tissue in the flush of life.

Giarmin and Freedman confirmed that the human brain manufactures serotonin at various sites other than the pineal. It is produced in scattered isolated cells, but the density of these cells varies with their location in the brain. For example, in the thalamus, they discovered 61 nanograms of serotonin per gram of tissue; in the hippocampus, 56 ng.; in the central gray section of the midbrain, they found 482 ng. But in the pineal, they found 3140 ng. of serotonin per gram of tissue. The pineal was unmistakably the richest site of serotonin in the brain!

Since the pineal seems to produce serotonin in excess of its needs for melatonin production, what happens to this excess? Does the gland provide a kind of serotonin reservoir for the brain as a whole? Can one make a correlation between pineal serotonin and mental disorder?

As its name would imply, the pineal looks like a miniature pine cone sitting in the middle of the brain atop a stalk-like appendage. The vascular and neural connections between it and the rest of the body run down this 2 stalk into the spinal column and the central nervous a system, not into the brain proper. If serotonin from the pineal does get back into the brain proper, it a must do so through such a circuitous route that many workers discredit this possibility.

Though their work only accidentally impinged on making such correlations, Giarmin and Freedman did find that the pineals of certain deceased mental patients who had suffered from specified mental disorders showed a considerable excess of serotonin in their pineals. The average amount of serotonin found in the pineals of normal persons is about 3.52 micrograms per gland.

One schizophrenic was found to have a pineal containing 10 micrograms of serotonin, while another patient, a sufferer from delirium tremens, had a pineal containing 22.82 micrograms of serotonin. Owing to the difficulties of obtaining

the brains of the recently dead for autopsy, the Giarmin-Freedman sample is pathetically small, consisting only of thirteen cases.

The same difficulties which confronted them, also confront other workers who might be tempted to confirm these findings on a larger scale.

Strong suspicion has fallen now on serotonin as being one of the principal agents of the psychedelic experience, but whatever its role, it is certain that other neurohumors are additionally involved in the chemical transactions which produce the state. It is likely that LSD itself produces certain effects quite on its own.

Studies made with tracer elements and the electron microscope now reveal that LSD strikes like a chemical guerrilla, entering into receptor granules in brain cells swiftly, and then leaving swiftly after a very short time, perhaps ten or twenty minutes (in animals). This initial period coincides with the onset of the most violent symptoms of the LSD state as it is observed in test animals.

But when the twenty minutes are done, and the bulk of the LSD has left the receptor granules, it is replaced by what seems to be excessive, or supernormal, amounts of serotonin. Since the LSD state lasts for some ten hours, and during this time serotonin can be measured (again at autopsy) in supernormal amounts in receptor granules, it must be considered one of the important participants of that chemical transaction which produces the state.

However, melatonin possesses the same basic indole molecular structure as the LSD molecule. It is not at all difficult to imagine how this substance could be metamorphosed into a psychedelic material. But so far, injections of melatonin have produced no altered mental states in humans.

The use of LSD in exploring these strange dislocated states of mind is most convenient because the effects are invariably reliable, and within certain limits quite predictable. All the neuro-humours tend to alter, in one way or another, the data processing programming of the brain. LSD is one of the keys which open the compartment into which this drastic new programming can be introduced.

Fasting as a means of altering body chemistry and so producing this kind of psychedelic state seems to be effective only among those who are marginally nourished in the first place.

Sensory deprivation IS effective, and for those who can will themselves into a state of such intense meditation as will exclude incoming signals from the environment, the computer model provides a simple analogy.

The brain is always working, but as these outside signals cease coming through, the brain begins processing peripheral data, memories from the past, sense impressions of such subtlety that they are normally bypassed in favour of more vivid input signals which affect survival and so on.

For most of us, most of the time, our world is a Darwinian environment. We must manipulate ourselves within it, or attempt to manipulate it in order to survive. These survival needs tend to colour our appreciation of this world, and we are continually making judgments about it.

Some, of these judgments are based on prior personal experience, others are provided by the culture. This "recognition system" is one of the elements disrupted by the psychedelic state. Normally we anticipate that water will feel wet. To the madman, or the person entranced by LSD, the wetness of water can come as an incredible surprise.

The principal question concerning psychedelic estates remains: How much disruption can the system tolerate? "Cowper came to me," writes William Blake, "and said: 'O that I were insane always…. Can you not make me truly insane? I will never rest till I am so. O that in the bosom of God I was hid. You retain health and yet are as mad as any of us–over us all.'"

The problem of how to maintain a certain madness while at the same time functioning at peak efficiency has now captured the attention of many psychiatrists. There seems to be a point at which "creative" madness becomes degenerative, impeding function rather than stimulating it.

The mental hospitals are filled with patients who passed from transient, or occasional, psychedelic states into perpetual psychosis. Freedman, with the help of another Yale colleague, Malcolm Bowers, has collected a number of case histories of persons who were admitted into mental institutions for various acute psychotic seizures.

But as they speak and write about the onset of their illness, they describe psychedelic experiences. Why did they not "pass through" the experience to be enriched by it, as did William Blake? Here, for example, is the report of a twenty-one-year-old student who was removed to a mental hospital in "a severely agitated delusion state":

"I [began to be] fascinated by the little insignificant things around me. There was an additional awareness of the world that would do artists, architects and painters good. I ended up by being too emotional, but I felt very much at home with myself, very much at ease….it was not a case of seeing more broadly, but deeper.

I was losing touch with the outside world, and lost my sense of time….I could see more deeply into the problems other people had and would go directly into a deeper subject with a person. I had the feeling that I loved everybody in the world. Sharing emotions was like wiping the shadow away, wiping away a false face."

Bowers and Freedman do not tell us the final history of this patient. We do know, however, that Cowper asked for insanity and got it. He died a gibbering idiot, while Blake lived on into a ripe and irritable old age, still working, still writing, still slipping in and out of his mysterious states, which allowed him a clear and brilliant vision of a world which, if the rest of us see at all, we see as through a glass darkly.

Man is unique by virtue of being possessed by intuitions concerning the scope of the mysterious universe he inhabits. He has devised for himself all manner of instruments to probe the nature of this universe. Now at last, with the molecule of this strange acid, he has found an instrument which opens the inner eye of the mind and which may hopefully allow him to explore the vast interior spaces, where the history of millions of years of memories lie entangled among the roots of the primordial self. Through it we may find a means of understanding more clearly the roots of madness and of helping the insane to return to the world of commonplace reality.

Epilogue

The Meditating Shiva



Hindus believe that there is one God, Brahman, who is the cause and foundation of all existence. Brahman, being the Absolute, is one, indivisible, unchangeable, beyond action and inaction, beyond good and evil. The Ultimate is referred to as Purushottoma (Highest Spirit), Parameshvara (*Highest Lord*), Bhagvan (*God*) and many other terms. But latent within Brahman is the power of life. When this power is manifested in the creation of a universe, it takes the form of maya, the material world.

"Vedic Invocations, which are deemed animistic and crudely pagan by many scholars, merely invoke God through his attributes and functions. He is the Force behind all of nature's mighty forces, the Light behind the light; the Terror behind the terror; the Delight behind delights; the Ultimate Activity behind all

activities. Similarly, God's various names in the Vedas are the one God viewed in terms of his attributes, functions, and nature. There is no real suggestion of anything besides the One."

"Hardly polytheism. Long before the burgeoning Hindu pantheon; long before Shiva, Vishnu, Rama, Ganesh, Parvati, Saraswati, Laxmi, and the 35,999,993 others, this is the God of the Vedas, and religion in its most pristine form."

The God/Goddess Shiva or Lord Shiva is the other great figure in the modern pantheon. In contrast to the regal attributes of Vishnu, Shiva is a figure of renunciation. A favourite image portrays him as an ascetic, performing meditation alone in the fastness of the Himalayas. There he sits on a tiger skin, clad only in a loincloth, covered with sacred ash that gives his skin a gray colour. His trident is stuck into the ground next to him. Around his neck is a snake. From his matted hair, tied in a topknot, the river Ganga (Ganges) descends to the earth. His neck is blue, a reminder of the time he drank the poison that emerged while gods and demons competed to churn the milk ocean. Shiva often appears in this image as an antisocial being, who once burned up Kama, the god of love, with a glance.

The great yogi image as seen above, accents Shiva's ascetic aspect. It provides a model for many Shaivites who seek to practice asceticism. Shiva is depicted here in a meditating posture. His eyes are half-shut to the world, suggesting that he is in the world but no of it. He wears wild animals skins, emblematic of his primal energy. His home is in the Himalayas.

He carries a trident that represents control over mind, body and intellect. Around his neck is a tamed cobra symbolizing his triumph over the ego, because the ego, like the serpent, harasses us with desires. In the top of his hair lies the goddess Ganga. From here, the river Ganges flows softly to earth, suggesting Shiva's compassionate nature.

The Nataraja is one of the best known images of this Hindu deity. The image depicts Shiva's cosmic dance during the auspicious occasion of the **Maha Shivaratri**, the great night of Shiva. Shiva dances the night away dispelling the ignorance of the night. Now, the ascetic yogi is a dancer. He dances wild and free as indicated by his flying hair, but his face is tranquil and composed. His forearms indicate his great power, and each of them expresses a meaningful gesture. In one hand he holds a "dhamaru" (a two-headed drum). In the other he holds a flame. With the drum he sounds the world into existence. With the flame he destroys it in order to create another.

One hand is upraised in a gesture that tells the devotee to fear not. The other hand points down to the uplifted foot, where the devotee may find refuge. It is

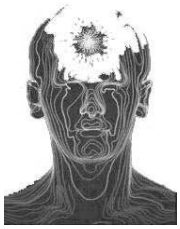
an invitation to approach. His feet also make significant gestures. With a planted foot he crushes the demon of ignorance and sin. The lifted foot symbolizes his freedom from the world. Surrounding the entire image is a ring of fire.This is Samsara, the phenomenal world.

One final image of Shiva illustrates his endogenous nature. All the great gods of Hinduism have their essential female counterpart. This female aspect of the divine is depicted in a variety of ways. One of the more interesting ways is illustrated in the image of Shiva as the half-woman lord. In it, Shiva's endogeny is shown as a single individual with male and female halves. Such an image suggests the all-encompassing nature of the divine. It reminds one of the limitations of anything in human experience to capture it.

Lord Shiva is the God of all. Like the mother He showers the grace for all the children, but the misusing children get punished. This Supreme Lord better than a mother does not withhold the grace, He is our beloved *pashupati*.

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